

against the Muslims and in pursuance of that agitation meetings were held wherein sometimes fiery speeches were made which were not only anti-Muslim, they were anti-socialist and also anti-Congress.

15.56 There was a collection of arms by certain individuals the ostensible object of which was to help the Hindus agitating in the neighbouring Hyderabad State. A bomb was even thrown in the heart of the city. But even though the thrower of the bomb was arrested and he made a confessional statement that N. D. Apte had given him the bomb, the police could not proceed because the confessional statement was withdrawn and even without its withdrawal it was a piece of evidence of very little, if any, value. It also appears that the police did not think this bomb throwing to be serious because according to the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. Pravinsinhji Vijaysinhji, it was not thrown on any individual, showing thereby that unless it was directed against a person or persons, according to the head of the District Police, it was not a serious matter.

15.57 Two speeches which have been brought to the notice of the Commission, one by Mr. G. V. Ketkar that Gandhism was enemy No. 1 and the other by Dr. Parchure that Gandhi and Nehru will soon reap the fruits of their sins—these speeches were made on two successive days in December, 1947—show that the trend of speeches of some of the Hindu Mahasabha workers was not free from preaching violence or at least producing disaffection against the Congress leaders which could well have led to violence.

15.58 The Government was not wholly ignorant and inactive in regard to what was happening in Poona. That was as long back as July 1947. It ordered lists of Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. leaders to be compiled which lists showed that some of them were Savarkarites and some of them were both Savarkarites as well as potentially dangerous. The order passed by Government for special reports in regard to these persons was subsequently withdrawn because it was considered that the ordinary weekly reports were sufficient for the purpose of apprising the Government of what was happening. The discontinuance of the special reports even though "for the present" could impair that watchfulness which a specific and special order for special reports would have implied.

15.59 The Hindu Mahasabha Press particularly the *Agrani* was writing in a rabid strain, so much so that a substantial security had to be demanded from it. Yet it was not deterred from its propaganda and it even adopted the subterfuge of discontinuing the "Agrani" and starting it under the name of *Hindu Rashtira* with the same rabid policy, much to the chagrin of the police, which is shown by the evidence of Deputy Superintendent Angarkar, witness No. 68.

15.60 As the story of the happenings in Poona is unfolded rather vividly by the statements of high ranking police officials like the Inspector General of Police, Bombay, the Deputy Inspector General, C.I.D., District Superintendent of Police and other subordinate police officials, the statement of each witness is sometimes briefly and sometimes at great length discussed and analysed and at the end of each witness a resume of what he has started has been given. This has been

done to facilitate appreciating what each witness has said and what points the evidence of each witness has brought out. At the end of the portion of the Chapter dealing with Poona matters the Commission has set out its conclusion which, in its opinion, result from a discussion and analysis of the oral evidence of witnesses and the documents which have been placed before the Commission.

15.61 The evidence of what one may term non-official witnesses has been separately dealt with.

#### *Statements of witnesses in Poona*

15.62 Commission will now take up the analysis of the evidence of Poona witnesses.

*N. M. Kanite wit. 4*

15.63 Mr. N. M. Kamte, retired Inspector General of Police witness No. 4, was examined thrice before this Commission and once before Mr. Pathak. He stated that Hindu Mahasabha movement did exist in Poona but he could not say if it was a strong movement. Its aims and objects were to unite the Hindus and protect their interests and there was antagonism between the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress. The Hindu Rashtira Dal in Poona was led by Chitpawan Brahmins but he was not aware of any anti-Gandhi movement in Poona in particular and in Maharashtra in general although some of the leaders did not agree with his non-violence.

15.64 Although the Hindu Mahasabha was not very much excited about Partition, it was excited when the news of what was happening in western Punjab came.

15.65 The C.I.D. must have reported the speeches made by Hindu Mahasabha workers in July 1947. And if the speech ascribed to Nathuram Godse by Mr. G. V. Ketkar was made the police reporters would certainly have recorded it.

15.66 He had no knowledge of any information given to Balasahib Kher about the danger to the life of Gandhiji, either by Ketkar or Balukaka Kanitkar. But he knew that the C.I.D. watched the movements of those persons from whom there was apprehension of violence.

15.67 He read about the throwing of the bomb in the newspapers. Nobody informed him about that fact. He could not connect Madanlal with any person in Poona nor could he say if the Poona Police knew that Madanlal was living in Ahmednagar. Mr. Kamte did not know professor Jain. Between the explosion of the bomb and the murder of the Mahatma he did not know what the conspirators were and he had no reason to suspect Poona people being involved in it. The first time he came to know about this fact was when Mr. Sanjevi telephoned to him about the murder on January 30, 1948 in the evening.

15.68 After he got the information, he telephoned to Mr. Gurtu, A.D.I.G., C.I.D. and his reply was that he knew that Poona people were political suspects and were against Mahatma Gandhi for his

giving 55 crores. Mr. Sanjevi had given some names to him. He could not recollect those names but he had passed them on to Mr. Gurtu and Mr. Gurtu said that he did know that they were against Mahatma Gandhi. He might have given only one name and Mr. Gurtu inferred the others.

15.69 The Poona Police were not associated in the investigation from 20th to 30th January 1948 excepting that Mr. Rana was in Delhi and had been given certain information and also a copy of Madanlal's statement dated January 24, 1948 which was shown to him (Mr. Kamte) by Mr. Rana a day or two after the murder.

15.70 He did not try to find out what was happening in Delhi about the investigation of the bomb case. Generally it was the practice that if there was anything worth the Provincial Police knowing it, the D.I.B. used to inform the Inspector Generals and the D.I.G.s, C.I.D.

15.71 Nagarvala did not give him any information in regard to what the Minister had told him regarding Professor Jain which in his opinion Nagarvala should have done. Nagarvala said to him that the Minister had told him not to inform either him (Kamte) or the Commissioner. He (Kamte) did not ask Nagarvala why that was so. In normal course this matter should have been reported to him because important matters are normally conveyed to the superior officers. After he got this information from Nagarvala, he asked the Minister and he replied that he said that because he believed that he (Kamte) was not in Bombay and Barucha was not very effective. Mr. Kamte added that he might be wrong but his impression was that the Minister thought that he should get the credit for "bringing into light the offenders".

15.72 When asked why the Poona Police remained absolutely ignorant about the conspiracy, he said the police could not be present everywhere and certainly not in a jail where the conspiracy started. He added that orders were sought for the arrest of Karkare but he could not recollect why those orders were not passed or why Karkare was not arrested.

15.73 Commission may here observe that Karkare was ordered to be detained but the order was made much too late and by that time Karkare had vanished from Ahmednagar as also had Madanlal against whom orders were passed earlier.

15.74 Immediately after he got information about the murder he sent for Rana and asked him for the statement of Madanlal which Rana showed him. Mr. Kamte then asked him why he had not taken immediate action, come to Poona and informed Gurtu. His reply was that he was waiting for Inspector Angarkar who was then on leave. Mr. Kamte did not think that the Poona Police was sympathetic towards the conspirators or the R.S.S.

15.75 Mr. Kamte was asked what a police officer should have done if he had been given the information which was given by Professor Jain. He replied—

"I would have asked the Branch concerned to register an offence and to arrest the persons named in the information.

If it was merely an intention I would have arrested those persons. I would also have stationed officers from Maharashtra round about Mahatma Gandhi with the direction that they should keep an eye on any person who comes from Maharashtra specially the named persons, and arrest them if and when they came near Mahatma Gandhi or if they acted in a suspicious manner."

15.76 He was shown Ex. 5 and was asked what the Bombay Police should have done with that. He replied that the C.I.D., Poona should have been informed.

15.77 If the information given to Nagarvala was that some people of Poona and Ahmednagar were involved in the conspiracy then he should have got in touch with the C.I.D., Poona.

15.78 He (Kamte) first said that he did not know that the intention of the conspirators was to kidnap Mahatma Gandhi. He knew nothing about the facts contained in Nagarvala's letter to Mr. Sanjevi dated 30th January 1948, Ex. 8. Then Mr. Kamte added that he had a faint recollection "that Nagarvala may have told me about the theory of kidnapping". He thought that it was a fantastic theory.

In answer to another question he said:—

"The vigilance will depend on the suspicion against the persons concerned. In this case, the suspicion was not of murdering Mahatmaji but the suspicion was that there were some people in Poona who were against Mahatmaji's idea of giving 55 crores to Pakistan. If Gurtu had learnt about Madanlal's statement, he could easily have come to the conclusion that these are the people who were conspiring to murder Mahatmaji."

The Poona Police did not have sufficient information which could have led them to keep a watch on those persons.

15.79 When asked whether he asked Rana as to why he had kept the statement of Madanlal with himself without taking any action, he replied that he could not remember what reply Rana gave but he followed up that with his letter which has already been mentioned. He did not know of N. V. Godse before the murder, nor did he know about Karkare. He had never read the *Agrani* or the *Hindu Rashtra*. He did not know that Mr. Jedhe had warned Mr. N. V. Gadgil about the Poona people. Mr. Jedhe never gave him (Mr. Kamte) any information.

15.80 He did not know that Karkare was involved in some serious offences and warrants for his arrest had been issued. He came to know about it after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi.

15.81 Mr. Kamte was recalled and he said that as far as he knew the police had no knowledge that "a conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi was brewing up". Had they known it they would have taken action in time. He said that the practice was that whenever a bomb was thrown on a person of the prominence of Mahatma Gandhi,



information was sent to the D.I.G.s of C.I.D. of all the Provinces concerned and if ramifications were all over India then ever Inspector General and Deputy Inspector Generals, C.I.D. would be informed. If the identity of the persons committing an offence was not known, sending of information to Inspector Generals of different Provinces would be really futile because it would not help anybody. But if there was a reasonable suspicion that the accused may escape into other parts of India then it would be wise to send information to all the Inspectors General.

15.82 He had been told as a police officer that the accused person in a case like a bomb throwing case belonged to the Province of Bombay, he would at once have informed the D.I.G., C.I.D., the Commissioner of Police, and the Inspector General of Police, Bombay and also of the bordering Provinces. If he had known that the accused persons were not outsiders and were Delhiwalas, he would have stationed his men at the railway stations, airports and other terminals including the roads leading out of the town but he would have only placed those men who were intelligent. His experience was that accused persons do not usually try to flee at once but they first try to hide and later seek an opportunity to go out of the place. Had he known that the people in the conspiracy were from Bombay he would have placed 20 or 25 persons from Bombay around Mahatma Gandhi to see that the conspirators did not get anywhere near him. Godse etc. were known to Poona C.I.D. There must have been good reason why they were not shadowed. Once a man was in a list called the Black List, he was shadowed for 24 hours. As the names of Godse etc. were not in that List it means the C.I.D. did not know that they were dangerous.

15.83 As far as he knew there was a rule that information had to be given to the District Magistrate of the commission of serious offences, at least that would happen in Bombay. He had heard of Mr. G. V. Ketkar of Poona but did not know him personally.

15.84 In cross-examination he said if the statement Ex. 1 had been shown to him earlier, he would have got those persons mentioned there shadowed and kept them under constant watch. If the statement showed that there was a conspiracy to murder, he would have asked the police to arrest them at once and had he been told that one was an editor of the *Hindu Rashtira*, Poona and the other the owner of *Shashtra Bhandar*, he would have been able to find out at once through his subordinate staff as to the identity of those persons. Before the murder he had not heard of Apte or Nathuram Godse. If he had arrested them, he might or might not have put shadow on their close associates.

15.85 Hindu Mahasabha policy was extremely anti-Muslim. Mr. Rana was not pro-Hindu Mahasabha.

"Q. Supposing action in Poona on the basis of Madanlal's statement which had been brought by Mr. Rana to Poona even on the 27th or in any case before the actual assassination of Mahatma Gandhi had led to the arrest of the persons therein indicated, i.e., Badge, Godse, Apte and

Karkare, would it have resulted in the banning of the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S.?

Ans. No."

Local police in Poona had not been informed of the statement of Madanlal. Delhi Police should have asked them to arrest the accused indicated by Madanlal.

15.86 Mr. Kamte was again recalled but his examination was in regard to his correspondence with Mr. Rana. In cross-examination by Mr. Kotwal, Mr. Kamte said that had he been in place of Mr. Sanjevi he would have got into contact with the Inspector General of Police, Bombay and if a request had been made by the D.I.B., he would have certainly sent Bombay men to Delhi. He added that Poona people had no personal grudge against Gandhiji and it came as a surprise to him when he heard about Gandhiji's murder.

15.87 In his letter to Mr. Sanjevi dated 20th April, 1948, Ex. 97, Mr. Kamte had complained about Rana's bungling. He said that his intention was to make Rana realise the desirability of taking steps immediately, he got a copy of Madanlal's statement and his desire was that Rana should not commit a mistake like that again. It shows that in the opinion of Mr. Kamte, Rana bungled in not making any use of the statement of Madanlal which had been handed over to him in Delhi on 25th January, 1948. But will there be another Gandhiji to be protected?

15.88 Mr. Kamte when recalled stated that as far as he knew the police in Poona had no knowledge about conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi. If they had known about it, they would have taken timely action. It would not be a matter of surprise that the police knew nothing of the conspiracy which must necessarily be formed in secret but the surprise is the failure of the police to work out anything useful after it got information from two sources—(1) Madanlal's statements, the first one of the 20th and the second one of 24th January; and (2) information given by Professor Jain to Mr. Morarji Desai and by him conveyed to Deputy Commissioner Nagarkar at Bombay—and both of them remained bogged in sterile investigation and tangential theories showing either complacency or paralysis.

15.89 The evidence of Mr. Kamte may be summed up thus:—

- (1) The Hindu Mahasabha movement in Poona was there but he could not say if it was a strong movement.
- (2) The Hindu Rashtira Dal was led by Chitpawan Brahmins but he did not know of any movement in Poona being anti-Gandhi though the leaders of the Dal were no believers of non-violence.
- (3) The police would have reported the speech alleged to be made by Godse about Gandhiji's living for 125 years if it had been made.

- (4) He had no knowledge of information given to Mr. Kher by Balukaka Kanitkar. But the C.I.D. did watch persons likely to commit violence.
- (5) He knew nothing of the information given by Jain to Mr. Morarji Desai who should have conveyed it to him and not to Nagarvala. Nagarvala also did not give him any information.
- (6) Sanjevi when informing him about Gandhiji's murder did give him some names which he could not recollect, but he passed them on to Mr. Gurtu who knew them to be anti-Gandhi. It is possible that Sanjevi might have given only one name and the others were worked out by Gurtu.
- (7) After the murder and after he heard Madanlal's statement, he asked Rana's explanation.
- (8) He would have stationed Bombay Police around Gandhiji to check on people from Maharashtra side if he knew that the conspirators were from Bombay.
- (9) He had not seen precis of Madanlal's statement, Ex. 5.
- (10) Nagarvala should have got into touch with Poona and Ahmednagar. If Gurtu had known of Madanlal's statement, he would have inferred conspiracy and who were in it.
- (11) He did not know of kidnapping theory which was a fantastic theory in any case.
- (12) He was never told of what Mr. Jedhe had said.
- (13) The police in Poona had no pre-knowledge of conspiracy to murder. Had they known it they would have taken timely action.
- (14) Godse etc. were known to Poona C.I.D. but they were not shadowed.
- (15) Had he known of Madanlal's statement, the persons mentioned therein would have been shadowed and kept under watch. From the mention of editor of the *Hindu Rashtra* others could have been identified.
- (16) From the mere fact that the conspirators were Godse and others, the Hindu Mahasabha could not be banned.
- (17) The Kamte-Rana correspondence shows that Mr. Rana had bungled.

U. H. Rana, wit. 3

15.90 Mr. U. H. Rana, D.I.G., C.I.D., witness No. 3 when examined on 7th February, 1967, stated that he was called by Mr. Sanjevi on the day following the explosion and was told that Madanlal had given certain information showing that his companions were from Bombay side but it did not disclose where they belonged to. He had not stated that they belong to Poona but he had mentioned Savarkar. Rana

was also told that Madanlal had said that one of them was a Sadhu with a beard and another was his servant named Shankar and the third was an editor of a newspaper and he did not say where the newspaper was published. Since Savarkar was mentioned, Mr. Rana at once concluded that they must be Savarkarites.

15.91 Mr. Rana himself had no information about Annexure V (Ex. 5) or Ex. 5A.

15.92 When the Delhi Police officers returned from Bombay, and Sanjevi told him about their having been sent back, Rana told Sanjevi that it must have been because of their remaining in Bombay in uniform would have upset the arrangements and Sanjevi was satisfied that everything was being done properly in Bombay. He also deposed that he did not give a copy of the full statement, Ex. 1, to Mr. Morarji Desai and that the copy of the statement which he brought from Delhi was meant for Mr. Nagarvala and therefore he did not take it back from him. He did not accept the statement of Mr. Nagarvala that he, the witness, showed the statement to Nagarvala and then took it back. This in short is what he stated before the Commission when he appeared the first time.

15.93 When recalled at Baroda, Mr. Rana said that he could not recollect whether Shankar's name was mentioned on the 21st January or after the murder.

15.94 During the time that he was D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona, he did not hear the story of Godse and others going to Panchgani. Nothing of importance came to his notice about the activities of Nathuram Godse or of Apte or of Badge or of their group, nor that they were directed towards violence. The police reporters whose duty it was to report proceedings or the speeches of the meetings addressed by politicians did not make any such report. These persons were not on the Black List to be shadowed. Nor did he know that the Kesari group was a militant group. He did not know that G. V. Ketkar, Bhagwan and others were connected with the Hindu Mahasabha.

15.95 He was then examined about Ahmednagar affairs. He did not know that the Collector, Mr. Khan, had written to Government that bringing in of refugees would disturb the hitherto peaceful communal atmosphere of Ahmednagar but he knew that refugees used to take out processions and shouted anti-Muslim slogans. He said that it was not correct that he was present when a procession of refugees was taken out or a meeting was held by them at Ahmednagar as stated by Madanlal. He said that he was not in Ahmednagar then.

15.96 He said that it was correct that the Razakar movement was causing border incidents in Ahmednagar District. He could not remember any murder committed by the Razakars but they were committing robberies and dacoities.

15.97 He had no knowledge of Karkare and Madanlal having been ordered to be detained. When asked if he had seen the reports of Sub-Inspector Balkundi dated 4th January, 1948, Ex. 66, about



Karkare and Madanlal, he replied that he must have seen it because there was his endorsement dated January 14 on it. But it was not within his province to recommend or not to recommend detention. They were not persons with a provincial "reputation". He was not camping at Ahmednagar in January but the A.D.I.G. (Crime) was.

15.98 He was away to Delhi from the 20th to 27th January and therefore he could not have known of the happenings in Poona in his absence.

15.99 Mr. Rana was then examined in regard to various bomb incidents at Ahmednagar and he said that he had seen the reports and sent Inspector Razak on 12th December 1947. If written reports were sent in regard to Ahmednagar incidents and his initials are on them, then he must have seen them. He was shown the report of Inspector Razak about the activities of Madanlal etc. but he said that it did not come to his notice but it might have come to his office. Nor did he know that Karkare was holding conferences with Apte and Godse. According to what he knew, neither Godse nor Apte were of provincial or inter-provincial importance. It was not reported to him that Godse and Apte were meeting Karkare in Ahmednagar.

15.100 He had not seen Ex. 67, the report of Sub-Inspector Balkundi dated 29th January 1948 about the identity of Madanlal. If the D.S.P. had received any information in regard to Madanlal in the ordinary course he should have sent it to him. There were violent activities in Poona and Ahmednagar but there was nothing to show that they were anti-Gandhi. They were anti-Muslim.

15.101 Mr. Rana had not seen the report about recovery of arms at the house of S. V. Ketkar nor had he seen the report dated January 26, 1948, of Inspector Razak about activities of various persons in Ahmednagar (Ex. 58).

15.102 He had not seen Ex. 54 regarding activities of Hindu Rashtra Dal. It was not reported to him that the activities of Godse and Apte were directed towards violence or that Godse and Apte both belonged to Hindu Mahasabha.

15.103 Proceedings of meetings of Hindu Mahasabha in June and July were not brought to his notice.

15.104 He had the list, Ex. 114, prepared but he could not say if the names of Godse, Apte, Athawle and Ketkar were there or not. Periodical reports were sent about the persons on the list but they were discontinued after the orders of Government passed on his recommendation.

15.105 He did not remember about the speeches of Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan at Kirkee made in November 1947. (Exs. 122 and 122A). But he must have seen a report of the speech of Dr. Parchure on 2nd December 1947 (Ex. 131) wherein he said that Gandhi and Nehru will reap the fruit of their sins quite soon. He did not remember the speeches made the following day at a meeting in Tilak Samarak

Mandir by Professor Mate and G. V. Ketkar, Ex. 206, wherein the latter said that Gandhism-cum-false nationalism was enemy No. 1. The practice was that if the speech was of sufficient importance it was sent by the office to him and he in turn in his discretion sent it to Government. If the speeches were of persons who were listed, then the speeches were reported in verbatim. He sent the report, Ex. 131, of Dr. Parchure's speech in order to let Government know about it. He added that from the information that he received from C.I.D. both Provincial and of the Districts there was nothing to indicate that there was any group or set of persons who were inclined or intended to murder Mahatma Gandhi or any other prominent Congress leader.

15.106 When asked about the statement of Mr. Munshi about the Poona school of thought led by Savarkar, he said it did exist but there was no information that its violence would be directed against Mahatma Gandhi nor did he know that the Kesari group was against Mahatma Gandhi.

15.107 The Provincial C.I.D. had no information of conspiracy to murder Gandhiji before 20th January, 1948. He could not say anything about its existence after the 20th January but if they had any information they must have reported to him.

15.108 Mr. Rana then described the system of classifying persons as to their relative importance. The Provincial C.I.D. reported to the Provincial Government and the Government of India whenever they got any information relevant to all-India matters; the Provincial C.I.D. reported directly to D.I.B.

15.109 Although he arrived at Delhi on the 20th evening, he learnt about the bomb explosion at Birla House the next morning. He did not know that Madanlal had anything to do with Ahmednagar. Mr. Sanjevi called him on 21st morning and asked him if he knew about Madanlal. What passed between the two of them was contained in his correspondence with Mr. Kamte, the then Inspector General of Police, Bombay.

15.110 Mr. Rana said:—

"I saw Mr. Sanjevi at about 9.30 a.m. or 10 a.m. He said that Madanlal had started talking and the latter stated that he came from Bombay; met Savarkar; and also gave the name of one Karkare and mentioned one Sadhu who had a servant. Mr. Sanjevi did not give me the name of the *Agrani* or its proprietor or editor or the name of *Hindu Rashtriya*, its proprietor or editor. I would like to repeat that he (Mr. Sanjevi) did not mention the names of either newspaper—*Agrani* and *Hindu Rashtriya*—or their proprietors or editors."

15.111 He advised Mr. Sanjevi to send two police officers to Bombay and Poona because Savarkar lived in Bombay and Poona was the stronghold of the Hindu Mahasabha. He could not say if Sanjevi knew any name besides Karkare's.

15.112 He did not know what information Delhi Police officers carried to Bombay or whether they took a copy of Madanlal's statement with them. No document was shown to him by Mr. Sanjevi at the time. Before the statement of Madanlal dated 24th January was given to him, he was not given a gist or any information about the contents of the statement. The statement was given to him on the evening of the 25th which he read in the train but he did not discuss the contents with anyone. Nagarvala told him that he had not sent the Delhi officers back but he had told them not to stay near Sher-e-Punjab Hotel whose proprietor was a suspect.

15.113 In the statement of Madanlal which he brought to Bombay, the name of the *Agrani* or the *Hindu Rashtira* was mentioned. There was also mention of the editor and of the proprietor. There appears to be some confusion in the witness's mind as the name *Agrani* is not there. He did not telephone to Poona from Nagarvala's house because Nagarvala told him that there was a big organisation and they wanted to make simultaneous arrests and Nagarvala's information was that they wanted to kidnap Mahatma Gandhi. Therefore, he did not inform his office in Poona to take any precautions in regard to the editor of the *Agrani*. Besides, he was going to Poona next morning and he thought he would take action when he reached there.

15.114 He did not think that the culprits would return immediately to put their design into operation. Sanjevi was also of the same opinion more particularly because one of them had been arrested.

15.115 He did not fly to Bombay because he did not like flying and air journeys did not suit him. The statement was not sent by air by the D.I.B. because he did not think that the conspirators would act so swiftly. Mr. Sanjevi had told him that he should proceed discreetly and cautiously so that they might make a clean sweep of all the persons in the conspiracy. This was particularly so because of Savarkar whose operations were deep-laid and quite wide in their extent.

15.116 Mr. Nagarvala only knew the name of Karkare and no other name. Rana did not advise Mr. Sanjevi to get Maratha policemen into Birla House to be on watch or any other persons from Poona or Bombay. He could not say if anybody else had advised him.

15.117 Mr. Rana was asked a specific question whether the culprits were known to the Poona C.I.D. as being persons who were likely to take part in violent activities. He replied:—

"I can now say that amongst them Apte, Godse, Karkare, Athawle and Badge were the potential mischief makers who were taking part in violent activities."

15.118 He was then asked if the sending of Bombay Police would have averted the catastrophe. He replied that there were too many assumptions in the question, that the same persons would commit the offence, they would select the same place or the men sent there would be able to identify them. He said that upto the 24th January he did not know that Madanlal had named any other persons excepting

Karkare and Savarkar. He was not told that Madanlal had made a statement to the police on the midnight of 20th January 1948. Sanjevi did tell him that Madanlal had other associates on Bombay side and one of them was a Sadhu wearing a beard but he did not say that amongst them one was a manager or editor of the *Rashtira* newspaper nor did Sanjevi say that Madanlal had given descriptions of six companions as his co-conspirators.

15.119 Mr. Sanjevi did not tell on the 21st nor on the 24th that one of the persons described by Madanlal was the editor of the *Agrani*.

15.120 Then he referred to his correspondence with Mr. Kamte.

15.121 He did not leave Madanlal's statement with Nagarvala because (1) Nagarvala already had the information from Home Minister, (2) He had been informed about Karkare and Savarkar, (3) Nagarvala had nothing to do with Poona, and (4). He himself was going to Poona the following day and he would take action himself.

15.122 If the Delhi Police officers had gone to Poona, Police there would have taken action. He said whatever Delhi Police may say, the names of the *Agrani* and the *Hindu Rashtira* were not mentioned until the statement of Madanlal dated 24th. From the fact that the officers returned from Bombay it can be inferred that either the Bombay Police had all the necessary clues or the officers themselves did not go to Poona. Whatever explanation he had to give he gave in his letters to Mr. Kamte. He said that in those days it was difficult to talk on the telephone because telephone operators were not above suspicion.

15.123 He said even with the Bombay Police round about Birla House, it would have been possible to stop the catastrophe only if Gandhiji had allowed the people going to his meetings to be searched or screened. Constituted as Mahatma was, used to mixing with the crowds, it was difficult to protect him in those conditions against a possible murderous assault.

15.124 He was in Delhi screening information regarding complicity of different persons in the conspiracy and also about Godse having been at different places. There was no truth in the allegation made against the ruling houses at Gwalior, Alwar, or Bharatpur. That was the result of his investigations. Mr. G. K. Handoo did come and see him at Gwalior and told him that his information was that Bakshi Ram knew something about the conspiracy of murdering Mahatma Gandhi by Godse and he could, if he liked, meet him. Rana advised him to write to the D.I.B. who would give directions. His (Mr. Rana's) attention was drawn to his letter, Ex. 208, dated April 3, 1948 to Mr. Sanjevi in which he said that Bakshi Ram might be referring to some other conspiracy. He said that he did write that and the D.I.B. agreed with him as his endorsements shows.



15.125 Sending Madanlal to Bombay did not occur to anyone. He wanted Inspector Angarkar because Nagarvala wanted Badge to be identified and Angarkar knew everyone and their associates. He did not read the *Hindu Rashtra*.

15.126 He talked to Nagarvala about the steps he (Nagarvala) was taking in the investigation but he did not tell him anything of the descriptions allegedly given by Madanlal in his statement. Nagarvala told him that the Delhi Police officers wanted his help in arresting Karkare. He did not say that they had mentioned the newspaper *Agrani* or *Hindu Rashtra*. The only name they had and which they mentioned to Mr. Nagarvala was "Kirkree".

15.127 The witness was shown Ex. 5A. He said he had never seen it before and what was contained in document would not be sufficient to identify any of the accused persons. He was speaking about himself. But with the portion within the red pencil line it could have been of some assistance.

15.128 He went to see the Home Minister on the 28th morning. His object was to find out who his informant was which Nagarvala had not been able to get. If the identity had been given, it is possible that they might have been able to find out something more. He reached Delhi after the murder on February 2. He did not know anything about Sathe who was mentioned by Mrs. Barve.

15.129 In cross-examination he said that when he went to Mr. Sanjevi on the 21st there were some other police officers one of whom was Rikhiresh and the other was Bhatia who were investigating officers in the bomb case. Neither of them had a statement of Madanlal with them and the talk was oral, no document was referred to and nobody mentioned the editor of *Agrani* or *Hindu Rashtra* or any newspaper nor was he asked by Mr. Sanjevi to find out about the editor of a newspaper. He was told that Madanlal had mentioned three persons—Karkare and a Sadhu and his servant, and the other companions were Marathas from Bombay side. As soon as Marathas of Bombay were mentioned, he (Rana) suspected Savarkar and his group. He mentioned Bombay to Sanjevi because Savarkar resided there and Poona because it was the stronghold of Hindu Mahasabhaite group. He had not heard that the officers going to Bombay had taken a precis of Madanlal's statement. He was told that Madanlal's statement was in Urdu; it was being translated to help him and the Bombay Police in the investigation in Bombay.

15.130 Mr. Sanjevi knew that he (Rana) was to travel by train and not by air and also when he would get to Bombay. He was to go by a circuitous route from Delhi via Allahabad and from Allahabad he went to Bombay by Allahabad Express reaching Bombay on the evening of 27th. As far as he knew, Mr. Sanjevi did not use telephone or wireless communications for conveying the gist of Madanlal's statement to Bombay or to Poona.

15.131 From the fact that Mr. Sanjevi knew that he (Rana) was travelling by train, he must be under the impression that because one of the conspirators had been arrested, the others were not likely

to come back soon to commit any further offences. Mr. Sanjevi told him that it would be sufficient if he took necessary action on reaching Bombay and Poona and that he should proceed cautiously and secretly and round up the whole lot in one sweep. On the 25th Sanjevi told him that one of the conspirators was an editor of a newspaper, but he did not mention the name of the person or the place of publication of the paper.

15.132 On his attention being drawn to his previous statement dated 7th March 1967, Mr. Rana said that the previous statement was made under a misapprehension and his present statement was the correct thing. He had not then refreshed his memory by reading his correspondence with Mr. Kamte and he must have got mixed up about the dates.

15.133 Mr. Sanjevi did not tell him that the Delhi Police officers had taken a copy of Madanlal's statement and the same had been returned by Nagarvala.

15.134 When on January 27, 1948 he was staying with Nagarvala, he asked him why he had sent back the Delhi officers, his reply was that he had not sent them back; and told him what had actually happened.

15.135 Mr. Rana said that it was absolutely incorrect that Mr. Morarji Desai did not inform Mr. Nagarvala. Only Professor Jain's identity had not been disclosed. If it had been disclosed it was possible that the Police might have got some more information but that is only a "might have".

15.136 Nagarvala also told him that he had made enquiries from Ahmednagar and was told that Karkare was no longer there and he had posted his men to be on the look-out for Karkare in Bombay and he also wanted some Police officers from Poona to identify Badge, a known trafficker in illicit arms. Nagarvala told him that his theory was that the attempt was to kidnap Mahatma Gandhi. He had concluded this on the basis of the information he had from his informers. Nagarvala told him that there were 20 principals and each one of them had a lot of persons working under them and Nagarvala believed that information to be correct.

15.137 When Nagarvala was speaking "and I was listening to him and asking him some questions also about it. I did not think this theory to be fantastic; on the other hand I asked him to inform the D.I.B. on telephone."

15.138 On 27th they spoke to the D.I.B. at about 7.30 p.m. He (Rana) spoke to Sanjevi first and told him that Nagarvala denied the sending of Police officers back and that he seemed to be proceeding on the right lines but he did not mention the kidnapping theory to Sanjevi but told him to take extra precautions at Birla House. Then Nagarvala spoke to the D.I.B. and mentioned the kidnapping theory. Nagarvala also stressed that necessary steps should be taken to guard the residence of Mahatma Gandhi and protect his person. Nagarvala also told him what steps he was taking. Nagarvala had

a diary in which he had names of suspects. He read the names out to him (Rana). It was a small Policeman's notebook. Out of the persons named in that pocket book Badge alone was involved in the conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi. Those names did not include any editor of a newspaper. Had Nagarvala known about the editor he would have contacted Poona and got the suspect arrested; at any rate that name would have been mentioned in the diary.

15.139 When Nagarvala mentioned the theory of kidnapping to Sanjevi, Sanjevi did not deprecate it or show any disapproval because if he had Nagarvala would have told him about it. Mr. Sanjevi neither disapproved of the kidnapping theory nor did he suggest any additional steps to be taken by the Bombay Police. Rana again emphasised that he impressed upon Sanjevi the necessity for greater and stringent protective measures because of the theory of kidnapping and a large number of persons being involved in it.

15.140 He did not expect the associates of Madanlal to be moving about openly. He expected that they would do so surreptitiously and would be lying low. He did not telephone to Poona because it was not expedient. He did not show the statement of Madanlal to the Home Minister. It was not correct that he did not show the statement of Madanlal to anyone because he heard to show it to the Home Minister. He also told the Home Minister that Nagarvala was proceeding on right lines. The Minister did not give him (Rana) the name of his informant.

15.141 When he went to Poona he asked for Angarkar but he was ill. Then he asked for Deulkar but he also was not available being away to Alibaug and he was called back immediately by wireless. Rao Sahib Gurtu knew the names of all the culprits mentioned by Madanlal. Other officers were available in Poona but he (Rana) only wanted Angarkar or Deulkar because they were the only ones who knew the names of the associates of Karkare and their hide-outs. He did not ask anyone about the presence of those persons in Poona. Subsequent enquiries showed that when he reached Poona, Apte and Godse were not there and he himself did not know the whereabouts of Badge. He learnt that Karkare was called Maharaj. After the murder Sanjevi asked Kamte to send some Police Officers from Bombay and they were sent by military plane on 31st January but he did not know who they were. That was because there was a fear that Central Cabinet Ministers would also be attacked. When Rana was sent back to Delhi to supervise the investigation he stayed with Sanjevi and on the morning of the third day they had a talk with each other but Sanjevi did not tell him that Nagarvala had proceeded on wrong lines.

15.142 The evidence of Mr. Rana can be divided into 3 parts (1) dealing with his statement regarding what happened in Bombay or Poona and matters connected therewith; (2) dealing with Delhi investigation; and (3) his investigation in Indian States.

15.143 Mr. Rana's evidence regarding Bombay shows that:—

- (1) The name of Shankar was not given to him on the 21st January and what he stated earlier was a mistake.

- (2) Nothing of importance was heard by him about the activities of Apte, Godse or Badge nor that Apte and Godse were indulging in violent activities and their names were not on the Black List to be shadowed.
- (3) He did not know that the Kesari group of Hindu Mahasabhaites was a militant group, nor that Savarkar group would commit violence against Gandhiji. He could not think that Gandhiji would be murdered.
- (4) He had no knowledge of activities of Karkare and Madanlal or of the arms find at the house of S. V. Ketkar at Ahmednagar.
- (5) Razakars were causing border incidents.
- (6) He had no knowledge about meetings of Rashtra Dal at Dadar in 1947.
- (7) There were violent activities in Ahmednagar and in Poona but they were anti-Moslem in nature.
- (8) He got the list of Hindu Mahasabha workers compiled and periodical reports were sent about those persons but they were discontinued on his recommendation.
- (9) He could not remember about the speeches made by Prof. Mate and G. V. Ketkar at the meeting of the 3rd December 1947 where G. V. Ketkar said their enemy No. 1 was false nationalism-cum-Gandhiism. He sent Ex. 131 the report of the speech of Dr. Parchure to Government.
- (10) There were no reports in Poona about conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi. The reports from districts did not show that there was a group or a party which was conspiring to kill the Mahatma. If there had been any such party it would have been reported to him.
- (11) Inspector Angarkar was required at Bombay because Mr. Nagarvala wanted somebody to identify Badge, a trafficker in arms.
- (12) Mr. Nagarvala told him that Karkare was no longer in Ahmednagar. (See 19 below).
- (13) He also told him about the kidnapping theory with which he agreed because he did not think it to be fantastic.
- (14) Both he and Mr. Nagarvala spoke to Mr. Sanjevi on the telephone on the 27th and Mr. Nagarvala conveyed to him his kidnapping theory which was not disapproved of by Mr. Sanjevi.
- (15) Mr. Nagarvala had some names with him and they did not include the editor of a newspaper.
- (16) He would not have imagined that the culprits would move about openly as they did. He thought they would be hiding.



- 147) He reached Bombay on the 27th January and as he had fever he stayed the night with Nagarvala. He showed the statement of Madanlal to Nagarvala but as it was a long statement he took it back promising to send him a copy. He first wanted to find out about the complaint of the Delhi Police Officers and besides (i) Nagarvala had the information given by the Home Minister; (ii) Nagarvala had nothing to do with Poona investigation; and (iii) he was going to Poona the following day and he could look to conspirators from Poona.
- (18) If Mr. Morarji Desai had disclosed Jain's name, the Police might have got more information but that was only "might have".
- (19) Nagarvala told him Karkare was not in Ahmednagar. (See 12 above).
- (20) After the murder Poona police officers were flown to Bombay to protect the Central Ministers.
- 15.144 About Delhi:—
- (1) Mr. Rana was called by Mr. Sanjevi and whatever passed between them was reported in his correspondence with Mr. Kamte, the then I.G.P. Bombay, Exs. 30 to 33.
- (2) Mr. Sanjevi did not mention the names of the 'Agrani' or 'Hindu Rashtra' or their editor or proprietor. Superintendents Bhatia and Rikhikesh saw him on the 21st but they did not have the statement of Madanlal with them and talk was oral.
- (3) Mr. Rana advised sending of two officers to Bombay and Poona but he does not know what information they carried with them nor whether they carried Madanlal's statement with them. He advised Bombay as Savarkar lived in Bombay and Poona as it was stronghold of the Mahasabha. If Delhi Officers had gone to Poona the Police there would have helped them.
- (4) Gist of the statement of Madanlal dated 24th January was not given to him.
- (5) He showed full statement of Madanlal to Mr. Nagarvala but took it back from him and Mr. Nagarvala did not read it through.
- (6) No one expected attack on the Mahatma to be repeated so soon, neither Mr. Sanjevi nor he himself.
- (7) He did not fly to Bombay as flying did not suit him. He went by train and Mr. Sanjevi knew about it.
- (8) Mr. Sanjevi told him to proceed carefully and make a clean sweep of all the culprits.
- (9) Mr. Nagarvala knew the name of Karkare only.

- (10) Mr. Rana did not advise Mr. Sanjevi to get Maratha Police at Birla House.
- (11) He could not now say that Apte, Godse, Karkare, Athawle and Badge were taking part in violent activities. But the efficacy of sending Bombay Police was problematic. They could only have been effective, if at all, if they had been allowed to screen those attending the prayer meetings. But Gandhiji did not allow it.
- (12) The names of 'Agrani' and 'Hindu Rashtra' were not mentioned till the 24th January, 1948 when Madanlal's fuller statement was recorded. There is a mistake as to the 'Agrani'.
- (13) It did not occur to any one to send Madanlal to Bombay.
- (14) He had not seen Ex. 5-A or Ex. 5 before.
- (15) He was told that Madanlal had mentioned three persons, Karkare, a sadhu and a servant, and that the other companions were Marathas from Bombay side. This made him suspect Savarkar's group.
- (16) Mr. Sanjevi did not use the telephone or wireless communication for conveying the gist of Madanlal's statement to Bombay.
- (17) Mr. Sanjevi told him that it would be sufficient if he took necessary action on reaching Bombay and Poona but he should proceed cautiously and secretly.
- (18) He also told him on the 25th that one of the conspirators was the editor of a newspaper but no names were mentioned.
- (19) Godse, Apte, Karkare and Badge were not on the Black List.
- (20) There were violent activities in Poona and Ahmednagar but they were not directed against Mahatma Gandhi.
- (21) The bomb throwing in Ahmednagar and Poona was anti-Muslim and anti-Razakar and not against Congress or Mahatma Gandhi.
- (22) He could never have imagined that Gandhiji would be murdered.
- (23) He would not have concluded from the alleged speech of Godse about Gandhiji's living for 125 years that his intention was to murder Mahatma Gandhi.
- (24) From the descriptions given in the fuller statement of Madanlal he would not have been able to identify the persons.

(25) He could not remember if he was told at Delhi that clothes marked 'N.V.G.' were found at Marina Hotel.

(25A) The report of Ahmednagar Police about Madanlal and Karkare had been seen by Mr. Rana but he made no use of that information. If he had no recollection of it, he should at once have asked his office if there was any information.

(26) If Delhi Police had gone to Poona, Poona Police would have given them every assistance.

15.145 Mr. Rana said that:—

(1) There was no truth in the allegation that ruling houses of Gwalior, Alwar and Bharatpur had any hand in the conspiracy.

(2) Mr. Handoo did come to see him at Gwalior and told him that Bakshi Ram knew something about the conspiracy but he (Rana) advised him to write to the D.I.B. Ram had written to the D.I.B. that Bakshi Ram must be referring to another conspiracy and the D.I.B. agreed with him

Rao Sahib Gurtu, wit. 22.

15.146 Rao Sahib Gurtu, witness No. 22, was the Assistant D.I.G., C.I.D. at Poona. He stated that the D.S.P. Ahmednagar made a reference towards the end of 1947 or thereabout about Madanlal who had addressed a meeting of refugees which had resulted in disturbances but he could not state whether there was any report about his activities after that. The witness also knew about Karkare who was a prominent Hindu Mahasabha leader in Ahmednagar but he could not say if his activities were of a violent nature. No such report was made to him. He did not know that Karkare had a shop for the sale of arms and ammunition and he remembered that a meeting of Raosahib Patwardhan was disturbed but whether there was any assault on him or not he could not say.

15.147 Reports used to come in about the communal activities of the group consisting of Nathuram Godse, Karkare, Apte and Badge and several other persons whose names he could not recollect, but they went under the name of Hindu Sabha Movement. Their propaganda was against Gandhiji's policies towards Muslims but not for doing harm to Mahatma Gandhi least of all murdering him. There were reports that bombs were being prepared by some of the workers of the Hindu Mahasabha Movement but not that they intended to Murder Mahatma Gandhi.

15.148 When the bomb was thrown at Birla House, he had a vague suspicion that that might be the handi-work of the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. group but he had no idea as to who exactly were involved in it. There was nothing in the C.I.D. record to direct their attention to Madanlal or the group with which he was connected nor that he was connected with the Hindu Sabha workers in Poona. It did not strike the C.I.D. police in Poona that he might be so connected with any particular group of Hindu Mahasabha workers of Poona

or Ahmednagar. No directions were sent from Delhi or Bombay asking the people in Poona to investigate about the throwing of the bomb. Mr. Rana also, when he returned from Delhi, did not give any directions for investigation in regard to Madanlal and his associates or whoever they were. No mention was made by Mr. Rana of any names alleged to have been given by Madanlal.

15.149 The witness did not even know that Madanlal had made a confessional statement and there was no information in Poona about the association of Madanlal with the R.S.S. group in Poona nor was any information given about the confession of Madanlal to the police.

15.150 The activities of Karkare as far as the witness knew and as far as was known to the police were confined to addressing meetings. The reports showed that he was strongly opposed to Mahatma Gandhi's policies and was propagating Hindu Mahasabha policies but the witness had no knowledge that one of their aims and objects was to murder top ranking Congress leaders, Mahatma Gandhi or Jawaharlal Nehru or Patel or anyone of that stature.

15.151 Nathuram Godse, Apte and Badge were active members of the Hindu Mahasabha but there was no actual incitement to violence by them although their propaganda tended towards violence without falling under anyone of the provisions of the Penal Code.

15.152 To this knowledge, there was no directive between January 20 and January 30 for investigation against Karkare, Apte, the Godses or Badge or anyone else who might have been considered dangerous for the lives of Congress leaders. The warrant for the arrest of Karkare was to be executed by the District Police and in the ordinary course the Poona C.I.D. would come to know about it as a piece of information. The witness did not know anything about the detention order of Madanlal nor had he seen it earlier. Whether the order was passed on any recommendation by the Provincial C.I.D. the witness could not naturally recollect.

15.153 The witness was shown an intercepted letter of Karkare (Ex. 43) which was addressed to various newspapers in Poona for publication. He said he must have come to know about it as it bore his endorsement. He knew about the orders for the detention of Karkare but could not say why they were passed.

15.154 Activities of Godse were also being watched by the police but it was not a continuous watch so as to prevent his eluding it. No orders were issued for the arrest of anyone after Madanlal made a statement containing names of his co-conspirators, if he did give their names. If any names had been given to Poona Police, it would have taken steps to apprehend them. He could not remember having any talk with Nagarkar during the period January 20 to January 30, 1948. If the witness had been told that one of the persons mentioned by Madanlal was the editor of the *Agari* or the *Hindu Rashtra*, he would have arrested him at once. When asked how he would have arrested persons named by Madanlal when warrants on Karkare could not be effectively served, his reply was that that was being done by the District Police and not by the C.I.D.



15.155 In his cross-examination he stated that reports were sent every week to amongst others, the D.I.B. by the D.I.G. compiled from the reports received from the D.S.P.s, and that these reports contained the names of Godse, Apte, Karkare, Savarkar and Dr. Parchure of Gwalior. Although from August 15, 1947, a watch was kept by the local police on certain Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. workers, the watch was discontinued in November 1947 but the witness could not give any reason but that must have been under Government's orders.

15.156 He stated that there were bomb incidents in Poona also as they were in Ahmednagar. One of them was in the Poona City Library in July 1947 in connection with which Athawle and N. D. Apte were arrested but what Athawle stated he could not remember. When asked why the editor was not arrested, he could not say but probably there was no evidence against him. The matter was being investigated by the District Police and not the Provincial C.I.D.

15.157 It never occurred to witness that Madanlal arrested in Delhi was the same person about whom a report had been made earlier and this not even after seeing the account of the bomb in the *Times of India*, Ex. 106, or the report of the Mahatma's speech in the *Bombay Chronicle*, Ex. 108. Poona group was opposed to the help Mahatma Gandhi had given to the Muslims and they strongly disapproved of giving 55 crores. The witness was never shown a copy of the statement of Madanlal brought by Mr. Rana. He had no information about the conspiracy to kidnap Mahatma Gandhi. He did, on being shown previous files, recollect about S. V. Ketkar's statement that the arms belonged to Karkare.

15.158 In cross-examination by Mr. Chawla, the witness stated that the *Agrani* was a very strong anti-Muslim paper and was attacking the policy of Mahatma Gandhi; but he had no knowledge that this group of people, connected with the *Agrani*, were collecting arms to bring about a revolution. The reports in regard to Godse's activities and that of his group were being sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Mr. Rana, but really the Assistant D.I.G. looked into these matters. No names were given to him by Mr. Rana. The Delhi Police never contacted him and a month later he came to know that they had come to Bombay and that they had been sent back from Bombay. Witness did not know whether they wanted to see him or not.

15.159 Rao Sahib Gurtu was examined by the Commission at Dharwar as he was not keeping good health but in spite of that he appeared to be quite alert and made his statement without showing any impairment of memory and without fumbling.

15.160 What emerges from his statement is this: that happenings in Ahmednagar and in Poona including the activities of Karkare and Madanlal at Ahmednagar and of Godse, Apte and Badge at Poona were being reported to the Provincial C.I.D. but they could not discover that the activities were so blatantly and violently against Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress that there was likelihood of any harm being done to them and secondly, that as things appeared then, the bomb incidents in Poona which were being investigated

by the District Police and the Provincial C.I.D. had no connection with anti-Gandhi or anti-Congress activity.

Thirdly, the Poona C.I.D. had no information about what Madanlal had stated or that he had named anybody who might have been connected with Poona Hindu Mahasabha directly. But if the name of Karkare had been given to the Provincial C.I.D. earlier and that is as far as the witness would go, it might have led to the activities of Karkare's friends being enquired into by Poona Police or C.I.D.

Fourthly, if at any time, the name of the editor of the *Agrani* had been mentioned, in all probability, this witness would have seen to his apprehension.

Fifthly, Mr. Rana, on his return from Bombay, did not show the confidential statement of Madanlal to this witness. As to what he would have done may be a matter of conjecture but foresight required that he should have been taken in confidence at an earlier stage.

Sixthly, there was no communication between this witness and Mr. Nagarvala and about what Mr. Nagarvala was doing this witness knew nothing.

*Pravinsinhji Vijaysinhji, wit. 38.*

15.161 Witness No. 38, Mr. Pravinsinhji Vijaysinhji, was the D.S.P. of Poona between July 1947 and May 1949 and subsequently rose to be the Inspector General of Police of Bombay. His deposition shows that in the middle of 1947 communal violence in Poona City was running very high because of the Partition and the feelings against Muslims had been worked up and was intensified because of the influx of refugees from the Punjab. The prominent Hindu Mahasabha workers then included Bhopatkar, Abhayankar, Apte, Nathuram Godse and G. V. Ketkar but their activities were confined to being anti-Muslim. There was no overt attack against the Muslim League or against the Muslims; although they carried on propaganda against the Congress because it agreed to the Partition and there was strong feeling against Mahatma Gandhi as being the main architect of Partition, there was no overt attack against them.

15.162 The trend of speeches of the Hindu Mahasabha workers was anti-Muslim but not inciting to violence. This witness knew nothing about anything said by Nathuram Godse against Mahatma Gandhi indicating that Mahatma Gandhi's life was in danger. He has stated that if such a thing had been said, he would have come to know through his L.I.B. staff. The person incharge of the L.I.B. was Inspector Angarkar.

15.163 At the time there was no refugee camp in Poona City but there were number of refugees who were carrying on petty trades.

15.164 Instructions had been issued for watching the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. workers. Their meetings were attended by the reporters and the special police, stationed at the railway stations and the bus stops, used to report about their arrivals

and departures from Poona. This witness knew nothing about why the *Agrani* was stopped or why the *Hindu Rashtra* was started. Those newspapers, said he, did not preach any violence. The witness denied any partiality of the police for the Hindu Mahasabha or the R.S.S.

15.165 A specific question was put to the witness about the July speech of Nathuram Godse in which he said that secret organisations should be formed and revolutionary methods resorted to and he had hinted that the time had come to do away with the top ranking Congress leaders or that Gandhiji or Nehru being thorns in the establishment of Hindu raj should be removed, and his reply was that it did not happen during his time. He was a reader of the *Kesari* and he heard nothing about the activities of Apte or his taking part in the bomb explosion. At no time did it come to his notice that Nathuram Godse or Apte were indulging in illegal activities.

15.166 There was nothing in the newspapers to indicate that Madanlal was or might be one of the refugees of Poona. No official help was asked for from the Poona Police in the investigation connected with the throwing of the bomb at Delhi and there was no marked activity in Poona after the bomb was thrown. On the day the Mahatma was murdered the houses of some of the Muslims were set on fire and there was danger of the breach of the peace and therefore the help of Army was requisitioned. Situation was very inflammatory.

15.167 This witness knew nothing about Sathe who was mentioned in the statement of Mrs. Barve. If Mr. Barve had the information that Poona people had gone to Delhi to murder Mahatma Gandhi, he would certainly have passed it on to him (the witness). The police was quite vigilant and tried to keep itself informed of the activities of every person who was likely to resort to violence. But it had no knowledge about what Apte and Godse were doing.

15.168 Mr. Rana gave no orders to the witness for arresting or keeping watch on the activities of anyone after his return from Delhi in January 1948 nor did he say anything about Madanlal nor did it strike anyone that Madanlal had associates in Poona. As the situation became very tense after the murder of Mahatma Gandhi, the police did not direct its energies towards finding out who the associates of Nathuram Godse were.

15.169 In connection with the Poona City Library bomb case, Apte and Athawle were arrested. Athawle made his confession but in view of withdrawal of the confession the case was withdrawn. The bomb was not thrown on any particular person but its object was to create a scare. The fact that a bomb had been thrown was not sufficient to warn the police to take stringent measures.

15.170 Coming to Hindu Rashtra Dal, the witness stated that a circular was issued to watch its activities and the activities of its members but he could not remember who its members were.

15.171 He did not know if Balukaka Kanitkar wrote anything to a Minister. After the bomb was thrown, this witness had no

information about Nathuram Godse and Apte having left Poona nor before the bomb was thrown did he receive any information concerning these two. This witness could not remember about the speech made by Nathuram Godse or what was said by socialists led by Jayaprakash Narayan or Ashoka Mehta that Hindu Mahasabha workers were trying to kill Mahatma Gandhi.

15.172 Mr. Vaidya in his cross-examination referred to Ex. 71, report of a meeting of 28th November 1947 where it is stated that Hindu Mahasabha leaders had been accused of their intention to kill Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru and there was no denial of that allegation; on the contrary, the allegation of the socialists was repeated as if it was a matter of pride of the Hindu Mahasabha workers. The report of this meeting never came to the notice of this witness.

15.173 It appears to the Commission that this question contains an important error. There is no mention of murdering Gandhiji. It only mentions Pt. Nehru. In the diary of 28th November, 1947, sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D. by this witness, there was mention of the condemnation of the Hindu Mahasabha by the socialists but the witness could not recollect anything about this.

15.174 The D.I.G., C.I.D. on his return from Delhi wanted Angar-kr who was not available and he did not want anybody else.

15.175 In reply to Mr. Chawla the witness said that he had no recollection of Godse's name being mentioned in connection with Poona bomb case, nor did he know anything of Karkare or Madanlal in connection with the activities of Godse and Apte nor that Madanlal and Karkare were visiting Poona. As far as the witness could remember, Godse did not advocate violence in his newspaper. Badge had an arms store and had been convicted for possession of illegal arms before the witness took charge of Poona but he never came to know that Nathuram Godse and Apte were collecting arms. But there was a strong rumour that arms were being collected for Hyderabad. The Hindu Mahasabha workers were very sympathetic towards Hyderabad movement. But he could recollect nothing about the activities in the district of Ahmednagar brought out in the secret abstract.

15.176 As for the events essential for the purposes of this Inquiry, this witness is not of much assistance as he either does not know anything about the main actors in the tragedy or has no recollection of events. His evidence comes to this:—

- (1) In 1947 there were communal riots in Poona intensified by the arrival of refugees from Pakistan, Punjab.
- (2) Activities of prominent Hindu Mahasabha workers were confined to being anti-Muslim and propaganda against Congress because of the Partition of which Mr. Gandhi was considered to be the architect.
- (3) Trend of speeches of Hindu Mahasabha leaders was not tending to violence and there was no indication of danger to Gandhiji's life.



- (4) He does not know why the *Agrani* was stopped or *Hindu Rashtira* started but it did not preach violence.
- (5) He had no knowledge about the alleged July speech of Godse.
- (6) No official help was asked for the Delhi bomb case.
- (7) The police had no knowledge of the activities of Godse or Apte or their advocating violence.
- (8) Referring to the bomb throwing by Athawle he said merely because a bomb was thrown was not sufficient to be a warning to the police.
- (9) He knew nothing about Balukaka Kanitkar's warning, if any.
- (10) He did not know who the members of the *Rashtira Dal* were.
- (11) Report of Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan's speech about accusation against the *Hindu Mahasabha* members' intention to kill Mahatma Gandhi did not come to him.

G. S. Chaubal, wit. 31.

15.177 Deputy Superintendent G. S. Chaubal, witness No. 31, was in the C.I.D. (Special Branch) and was in charge of the headquarters at Poona at the relevant time in 1947-48. His duties included general supervision of the Intelligence Branch in charge of confidential records. Amongst others he was dealing with communist affairs, i.e., their activities in the whole Province but he was not in charge of the intelligence regarding activities of the R.S.S. He knew Apte and Godse only by sight.

15.178 His report in regard to what happened at Panchgani and his statement in this regard is what has been stated by many others that all that happened was that about 15 people led by N. D. Apte held a black flag demonstration against Mahatma Gandhi and then had to leave the place. According to the intelligence reports that he got, there was nothing to show of the existence of a conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi. His report in regard to that incident is Ex. 48 dated July 23, 1944. He was aware of the organisation called *Hindu Rashtira Dal* which was started by Nathuram Godse and others but he knew nothing about its activities as mentioned in Ex. 34. He knew nothing about any contact which the Delhi police might have had with Poona Police during the period 20th January to 30th January 1948. He did not watch the activities of Nathuram Godse and on the whole his testimony is not of much importance to what was happening in Poona.

N. Y. Deulkar, wit. 6.

15.179 Another witness from Poona was Deputy Superintendent of Police N. Y. Deulkar, witness No. 6, who was a Deputy Superintendent of Police in the C.I.D. Branch of Poona. He did know N. V. Godse and his party who were opposed to the pro-Muslim policy of the Government. They, including Godse, were making fiery speeches

at public meeting which were taken down in extenso by police reporters. He also knew that Dr. Panchure of Gwalior protested against the pro-Muslim policy of Mahatma Gandhi. The leaders of the *Hindu Rashtira Dal* were Godse and Apte and others and that whenever these people made any speeches they used to be recorded by police reporters. There were no reports made to him "that the members of the *Hindu Rashtira Dal* were carrying on their activities prejudicial to the safety of the Central leaders or Congress leaders or against the stability of the State." He did not know Karkare or about his activities.

15.180 When asked about the nature of activities in Poona from November 1947 to January 1948, his reply was that reports about the speeches used to come to him and he sent them on to higher officers. When the activities of any individual had to be watched it was done by the City Intelligence Branch. He could not remember whether N. V. Godse was under police surveillance but when the reports were shown to him that Godse was under police surveillance since 1944, his reply was "whether he was so from November 1947 to January 1948, I am not able to say". What he meant to say was that the public activities of Godse were being reported but there was no shadow put on him. This was in spite of the fiery speeches which he had made. As to what he (Godse) exactly said in his speeches, the witness could not say.

15.181 He could not say anything about the forfeiture of the security of the *Agrani* for objectionable writings in July 1947 as he (the witness) was not in Poona at that time. Although he read the articles in the *Agrani*, he did not know that the Government was seriously examining them because of their being dangerous. He did not know anything about the starting of the *Hindu Rashtira Dal* by N. V. Godse or its inauguration by V. D. Savarkar.

15.182 The movements of Godse were not watched when he left Poona. Godse, Apte, Badge, Karkare and Shankar were from the area falling within his (the witness's) jurisdiction. Badge was dealing in arms but as far as the witness could say it was not illegal trafficking. The witness was shown the C.I.D. file containing record of Godse's activities but he could not say whether he had seen the file at any time earlier. He was asked if he would recommend a watch being kept on the persons mentioned had he seen the file earlier. His reply was in the affirmative. The reference was to Ex. 34, a note on *Hindu Rashtira Dal* from the police papers showing that the office-bearers of the *Dal* were Godse, Apte and others.

15.183 Deputy Superintendent Deulkar was recalled and he said that there was an incident at Panchgani on July 22, 1944 at one of the Mahatma Gandhi's meetings. Whatever happened was correctly recorded in Ex. 129. The person leading the party on that occasion was N. D. Apte. He had no information as to the presence of Nathuram Godse at that meeting nor about the recovery of the knife although he was personally present at the meeting. Nobody was arrested and, therefore, the statement that Nathuram Godse was arrested and then let off, would be incorrect.

15.184 He said that when the bomb was thrown at Delhi, he was not in Poona. He had been sent on an assignment to Janjira State. After the murder he was called back by the D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona but he did not come *via* Bombay. In cross-examination he was asked about the speech made by Dr. Parchure on December 2, 1947, Ex. 131. He said he had not seen it before.

15.185 When he was going to Janjira, it was unlikely that he visited the Special Branch, Bombay.

15.186 He did not know Badge by sight. To sum up:

- (1) Deputy Superintendent of Police Deulkar knew that Godse and his party were opposed to pro-Muslim policy of the Government.
- (2) Godse made fiery speeches which were taken down by police reporters.
- (3) There was no report made to witness about the members of Rashtra Dal carrying on activities against the safety of the Central Government Ministers or Congress leaders.
- (4) He could not remember if Godse was under police surveillance.
- (5) He could not say anything about forfeiture of the security of the *Agrani* as that was before his coming to Poona.
- (6) He has given what the avocations of Godse, Apte and Badge were.
- (7) He reported the Panchgani incident. Godse, was not there but N. D. Apte was.
- (8) It was unlikely that he went to Bombay Special Branch on his way to Janjira.

G. P. Angarkar, wit. 68

15.187 Deputy Superintendent of Police G. P. Angarkar, witness No. 68, was in the Intelligence Branch during the relevant period July 1947 to end of January 1948. Police shorthand reporters sent the proceedings of meetings to him and he sent them on to higher officers. Amongst those whose speeches had to be reported were some Hindu Sabha workers but there were no R.S.S. workers in the list. Amongst the former was Barrister Savarkar and L. B. Bhopatkar. Savarkar was the President of Hindu Mahasabha, Nathuram Godse was a kind of a bodyguard of his but was not particularly prominent. Apte was at one time a Government servant and an honorary recruiting officer in the Indian Army in Ahmednagar. Badge had a Shashtra Bhandar which was raided several times. Reports were sent to other districts also in regard to Badge when he sent any arms to those districts. But he was not considered dangerous and, therefore, his absence from Poona was not noticed.

15.188 Nathuram Godse's movements were not being watched but Apte's were to some extent. He was dangerous because of his anti-Muslim policy. The witness could not remember Godse making a speech about Gandhiji's living 125 years. If such a speech had been made, it would have been reported and brought to the notice of the D.I.G., C.I.D.

15.189 After the "*Agrani*" stopped, it restarted under the name "*Hindu Rashtra*" and this was allowed in spite of police objection. The *Agrani* was strongly anti-Congress but not particularly anti-Gandhi. Security was taken from it because of its policy of violence and encouragement of communal tension.

15.190 In June 1947 a bomb was thrown on what is known as Shivaji Road by one Athawle and he disclosed that it had been given to him by Apte. Both of them were arrested. Case against them was sent up for trial but was withdrawn. The arrest was the result of vigilance of the police but the Intelligence Branch was not responsible for prosecutions. It was in regard to this case that the local D.S.P. remarked it was not serious as it was not meant to be thrown on any particular person.

15.191 From July to December there were a large number of searches for arms. In one case a socialist leader Limaye was arrested and on a raid a number of weapons including automatic weapons were found and five persons were arrested. In another search an account book was found with an entry of Rs. 2,000 having been paid to Apte and Badge for the purchase of a machinegun, thus showing that these two persons were not so harmless. Cases were filed in court but were later on withdrawn and some of the persons mentioned in the account book were not even arrested. Had the prosecution proceeded, Apte and Badge would have been in it. The witness could not say under whose orders the cases were withdrawn. That was in December. He himself was against the withdrawal of cases because all his efforts were thereby rendered useless.

15.192 There was no such activity in Poona in the month of January. When the bomb was thrown at Birla House and Madanlal's name was mentioned, it did not convey anything to the police in Poona because they knew nothing about Madanlal.

15.193 Inspector Angarkar knew Apte and Badge but not Godse very well; but only as a police officer and not as a friend. Mr. Gartu never asked him about Apte, Godse and Badge nor was he sent to Bombay to help Mr. Nagarvala. If Deulkar was sent to Bombay he would not know.

15.194 There were no reports in the Local Intelligence Branch about the activities of Nathuram Godse nor anything to show that he was indulging in violent activities. There was no sympathy in the Local Intelligence Branch for Godse and his party.

15.195 The witness had information about Hindu Rashtra Dal who were called Savarkarites. He used to watch the movements of followers of Savarkar in a general way and they searched their houses also. To his knowledge the activities of Hindu Mahasabha in Poona were not directed against Mahatma Gandhi but were directed against meeting the danger from Muslims.

15.196 The policy of the *Agrani* was anti-Gandhi and anti-Congress and the paper was pronouncedly a communalist paper. In cross-examination the witness said that Savarkar and Bhopatkar were in the list of extreme political agitators.



15.197 The witness had throughout served in Poona in the C.I.D. as well as in the District and whenever the officers needed him they took his help and found him useful.

15.198 The Savarkarites were condemning pro-Muslim policies of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress but they were not against Gandhiji personally.

15.199 After the partition there was Hindu-Muslim tension in Poona also. He could not say whether the recovery of arms had anything to do with the Hindu Mahasabha. After the arrest of Baba Sahib Pranjpe the witness came to know that the weapons were being sent to Hyderabad. They came to know about the connection of the Hindu Mahasabha with the arms when the account book was found in a raid. He did not know that Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan was interested in the movement of arms to Hyderabad. In the raid above-mentioned, Apte and Godse were not arrested because they were not in the house where the raid was conducted. In the account book above-mentioned, the names of Apte and Badge were there but not of Godse. Apte and Badge were not arrested.

15.200 The C.I.D. staff in Poona was limited and they watched first one railway station and then two and no plainclothes policemen were placed at the houses mentioned in the list, Ex. 115. Occasional visits used to be paid to see about their whereabouts.

15.201 Ex. 121 dated 27th December 1947 shows that the collection of arms was for the people's struggle in the Hyderabad State.

15.202 The witness could not remember if Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan made a statement at a meeting that Hindu Mahasabha leaders wanted to murder Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders.

15.203 During the period 20th January to 30th January 1948 the Local Intelligence Branch was not asked to search for Karkare. He had not seen any such requisition. List of dangerous persons who were to be watched was made by Government or by the C.I.D. They kept a watch also over persons whom they thought dangerous and were not in the list. Badge was one of them. He was watched because he was dealing in arms. One man stationed to watch his movements was to watch the movements of others also. He used to find out who visited him and where he himself went.

15.204 Badge had a distinguishable appearance. He had a long beard and long hair. His house was searched a number of times. He was considered dangerous in the context of Hindu-Muslim tension.

15.205 Apte's house was searched about twice in 1947 and Nathuram Godse's once. The offices of the *Agrani* were not searched.

15.206 If he had known that the editor of the *Agrani* was in the conspiracy for bomb throwing at the Birla House, he would certainly have arrested him and if he was not in Poona he would have tried to find out his whereabouts and then tried to follow him. If he had

known that he had gone to Bombay he would have trailed him there. He would have tried to trace him wherever he was and even followed him to New Delhi. If he had known that Godse was one of the association of Madanlal he would at once have connected Apte with him because they were great friends. Athawle would also have been considered as an associate.

15.207 Mr. Khadiolkar, M.P., had stated before the Commission that Inspector Angarkar used to be "amongst them", i.e., he was quite friendly with them and knew everything and, therefore, he did not make any report to the police about the danger to Mahatma Gandhiji's life. Commission thought it necessary to examine Inspector Angarkar on this point and examined him at his village because of his failing health. He said, "The relations between the political workers belonging to the Congress Party and parties of that kind and the police were not so cordial as to be called friendly towards each other." He did not know anything about what Mr. Khadiolkar had stated to be within Angarkar's knowledge.

15.208 Because of the Partition, there was anti-Congress feeling. The Congress people were taken as pro-Muslims and were accused of trying to appease the Muslims. The Hindu Mahasabhaites wanted the Muslims to go away to Pakistan.

15.209 There was no shadowing of these extreme Hindu Mahasabha workers nor of the Hindu Rashttra Dal but they did try to find out what was going on amongst them by posting their men at strategic places. The police reporters used to report any meeting held in the town, i.e., those meetings about which they came to know anything.

15.210 Mr. Khadiolkar, as far as he could remember, was at that time a sickly person suffering from lung or abdominal ulcers. He was not an active worker. He was not in the Congress. He was in the Workers and Peasants Party.

15.211 The witness was specifically asked if there was anything in the air showing intense feelings against Mahatma Gandhi. His reply was that the situation was tense and even Congressmen were against the Congress and nobody was happy in his mind. Nobody knew what was happening or would happen and nobody was satisfied. He was so pressed for time that he did not talk to Congressmen or Hindu Mahasabhaite or the R.S.S. and that class of people and even if the police wanted to talk to them they would not talk to them. The Hindu Mahasabha was opposed to Mahatma Gandhi because of his appeasement policy towards the Muslims. Apte was dangerous at that time because of his anti-Muslim policy.

15.212 The witness did not know that Balukaka Kanitkar had written anything to Mr. B. G. Kher. He knew G. V. Ketkar only as a police officer would. From the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha or the R.S.S. or the Rashttra Dal he could not say that they were going to commit violence against Congress leaders, least of all against Mahatma Gandhi. Their activities were directed against the Muslims.

15.213 It was not correct that in 1947 after the Independence, he used to go and meet Congress workers quite often. It may be that he met them in 1954 when Samyukt Maharashtra movement was at its height. But it would not be correct to say that he became friendly with anyone. He was only doing his police duties.

15.214 He had no information in July-August 1947 that Gandhiji's life was in danger. Mr. Khadilkar may say so but the witness had no such information.

15.215 After Independence, his relations with the Congress leaders were neither friendly nor unfriendly. As a police officer he had to do his duty as best as he could. The atmosphere was tense and they had a great deal of work. The Hindu-Muslim tension was caused because of the atrocities committed by Muslims against Hindus in Pakistan and Hyderabad State. Some of the Hyderabad State Congress leaders had come to reside in Poona. They joined hands with Hindu Mahasabhaitees and socialists because they found them to be more useful than the Congress in the matter of collection of arms. It never came to his knowledge that the collection of arms was meant to be against the Congress leaders and to kill them. The collection of arms was on a large scale.

15.216 He had no suspicion that Badge, Apte, Godse and such class of people were going to murder Mahatma Gandhi. Savarkarites were not against Mahatma Gandhi's person but against his policies. But he never thought that they were going to murder him. Badge was preparing daggers in his two-roomed tenement.

15.217 A full summary of the evidence of Inspector Angarkar who, in the opinion of the Commission, was an important witness as he was a clever, clear-headed and an intelligent police officer whose demeanour in the witness box was straight and unhesitating, shows that—

- (1) In Poona there was a tense atmosphere as there was a strong feeling against the Muslims which was aggravated by two factors, the atrocities committed on Hindus by the Muslims in Pakistan and the atrocities of the Razakars in Hyderabad.
- (2) There was a great deal of collection of arms particularly by members of the Hindu Mahasabha but, as far as this witness knew, the arms collection was for use against the Muslims and particularly for use by Hindus to protect themselves against the Razakars in Hyderabad State.
- (3) There was intense feeling against the Congress for its policy of appeasement of the Muslims.
- (4) There was also an intense feeling against Mahatma Gandhi but not against him personally but against his pro-Muslim policies.
- (5) Apte, Godse and Badge had come to the notice of the police but that was in regard to their activities against the Muslims.

- (6) According to the evidence of this witness there was nothing to indicate that anybody in Poona was going to use violence against the Congress leaders, least of all against Mahatma Gandhi and certainly not to murder him.
- (7) There was bomb throwing in Poona and a number of searches were made which resulted in finding arms in the houses of various people and even cases were started but those cases were withdrawn much to the chagrin of the police and this witness.
- (8) Some prominent State Congress people from Hyderabad had come and settled down in Poona and were associating with the Hindu Mahasabhaitees and socialists because they found them to be more useful than the Congress in the matter of collection of arms which could be sent for use in Hyderabad State.
- (9) The witness never came to know that the collection of arms was for the purpose of using against the Congress leaders or to kill them.
- (10) The collection of arms was on a large scale.
- (11) This witness had no suspicion that Badge, Apte and Godse and people of that class were going to commit the murder of Mahatma Gandhi. He did not know Karkare. He did know that the Savarkarites were against the policies of Mahatma Gandhi but not against his person.
- (12) Apte, Godse and Badge were not shadowed as they were not of sufficient importance. The only persons from amongst the Hindu Mahasabha who were watched and whose speeches were taken down in verbatim were Savarkar and Bhopatkar, but even they do not seem to have been shadowed.
- (13) The policy of the Agrani was anti-Gandhi and anti-Congress and this was pronouncedly a communalist paper.
- (14) The witness denied that he was friendly with the Congress or any other party after Independence and that he knew anything about what Mr. Khadilkar had stated regarding the danger to Mahatma Gandhi's life and the atmosphere being full of violence towards Mahatma Gandhi.
- (15) Had he known that Godse was an associate of Madanlal, he would have followed him wherever he went, whether he was in Poona or Bombay or even Delhi.

K. M. Munshi, wit. 82

15.218 Mr. K. M. Munshi, an eminent Advocate, who has held every kind of high office in the Government and became a well-known Congress leader, stated in his deposition (witness No. 82) that there was a group of political thought against Mahatma Gandhi, compendiously known as the Kesari Group.

15.219 This group was led by Savarkar who advocated violence ever since he was a student and believed in political assassination



as an integral part of patriotism for achieving freedom. This school of thought had a number of youngmen, highly patriotic, devoted to the country, prepared to make any sacrifice required to liberate the country from foreign rule and it was confined to Western India. Those in Bengal were different.

15.220 As a result of the upsurge of Gandhian movement this group of terrorists became isolated because the masses began to follow Gandhiji as he was a Mahatma. In spite of the doubts which many people including Mr. Munshi himself entertained in regard to Gandhian movement, all active politicians had perforce to join him which resulted in the eclipse of the terrorists school still further, both in Poona and in Calcutta, but some of them, according to Mr. Munshi, saw the wisdom of generating strength by joining the Civil Disobedience Movement of Mahatma Gandhi.

15.221 A C.I.D. report at page 18 of I.B. file No. 8/CA/48-II shows that the Kesari group were something different from what may be called the Savarkar group. This document shows that when by August 1943 something like Rs. 2,19,514/- were collected as purses to V. D. Savarkar, the Kesari group became apprehensive that Savarkar may ultimately eclipse Lokmanya Tilak. It is not necessary for the Commission to go into these dissertations but it has thought fit to point out this distinction because that distinction exists in official papers.

15.222 As a consequence of this conflict in political methods and the want of faith in Gandhiji or Gandhian methods in the "Kesari" school of thought in Maharashtra personal prejudices against Mahatma Gandhi resulted. But due to the flood of emotional patriotism resulting from Gandhiji's "Quit India" Movement and the inability of anybody to withstand its influence, nobody was prepared to take the odium of anti-Gandhism. But Savarkar never lowered his flag; he continued to believe in political assassination as a permissive method for achieving Indian freedom; however, he remained quiescent and retreated into the background while the country was being swept by the "Quit India" Movement of Gandhiji. There was in the Kesari school of thought a certain section of people who genuinely believed that Hindus required a strong organisation to meet Muslim aggressiveness and were apprehensive of the weak-kneed policy of the secularity group.

15.223 The witness further stated that Partition was inevitable under the circumstances created in the country; but Gandhiji was opposed to it resulting in strained relations with Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel. Mr. Munshi was of the opinion that had India not been divided at that time, there would have been civil war at all levels resulting in street fighting in every town and also amongst the Defence Services and the Police; but in North India the feeling continued to exist amongst the Hindus in general that Mahatma Gandhi was responsible for the Partition and he became very unpopular because of his insistence on giving 55 crores to Pakistan. The feeling of the Hindus throughout was that if the Mahatma had not appeased the Muslims by conceding Pakistan, Hindus would have been spared the miseries to which they were subjected.

15.224 This is, in the opinion of the Commission, a fair and correct assessment of the political thought at the time in the country as a whole in general and in Maharashtra in particular and also in northern Provinces of India. This has been discussed at this stage with the happenings in Poona because Poona was the centre of the Kesari group and of the activities of the extreme Hindu views which existed in the Maharashtrian districts round about Poona. The Commission will have very much more to say and other evidence to discuss both oral and documentary in this connection. But it would suffice to say that there was a strong anti-Gandhi feeling amongst the Hindus particularly in Maharashtra of which the lead was in the hands of the Kesari group. In that case, Savarkar was tried as a member of the conspiracy but was acquitted. It has been stated before the Commission that the inspiration came from Savarkar and he even patted Madanlal for what he was proposing to do.

Mrs. Sarla Barve, wit. 39

15.225 Mrs. Barve, witness No. 39, in her written statement, Ex. 72, said that her husband who was the District Magistrate of Poona did come to know about the illegal activities of the Hindu Mahasabha members and that is why a watch was kept on their activities. She accused the authorities of not taking any proper notice. The throwing of the bomb on the 20th January 1948 was, according to her, a precursor of something very serious, e.g. murder. She also stated therein that her husband did know something about the impending trouble at Delhi and for that reason he telephoned Mr. Morarji Desai and informed him about it.

15.226 She stated that two or three days before the murder of Mahatma Gandhi a man called Sathe came to their house but as her husband was not present he told her that some Poona people had gone to Delhi to take the life of Mahatma Gandhi and that she repeated that story to her husband and that Baburao Sanas and Vasantree Deshmukh, other Maratha goondas, had made preparations to burn down houses of Brahmans who were vitally afraid of Maratha goondas. She asked Sathe where he lived and he said, "Sadashiv Peth" and that he was a retired school teacher.

15.227 On the 27th January 1948, she found her husband rather restless. He telephoned to Mr. Kamte, Inspector General of Police, after asking her to go out of the room. A little while later she told her husband what Sathe had told her which made her husband more restless, worried and serious and thereafter he was telephoning most of the time. After the murder, her husband arranged for military to come into the town and curfew was ordered and her husband slept for an hour or so and she accompanied her husband on two or three occasions. The curfew order continued for about a fortnight. She then deposed as to the Brahmans and non-Brahmans disturbances. She said that there was a definite plot to kill Mahatma Gandhi.

15.228 She was examined as a witness (No. 39) and she again stated about Sathe and that she gave the information to Mr. Barve.

She had no personal knowledge about the persons who were going to create trouble.

Gopal Godse, wit. 33

15.229 Gopal Godse, witness No. 33, stated that Nathuram Godse and Apte were collecting arms for Hyderabad trouble which had the approval of the Provincial Government. They were both studying Delhi politics and the threat of fast convinced Nathuram and Apte that Gandhi was trying to coerce the Government and this became a second reason for the collection of arms and ammunition by Nathuram Godse and Apte.

15.230 At one stage it had been given out that Pakistan National Assembly would meet in Delhi. It was the intention of Nathuram Godse and Apte and others to blow up that National Assembly.

15.231 Another thing that was worrying Nathuram and Apte was that Pakistan was not sending India's share of arms and ammunition. India, on the other hand, was sending to Pakistan her share of ammunition in India. Intention of Nathuram, Apte and others were to blow up those trains but it was not necessary because those trains never went.

15.232 When it was given out that 55 crores were not going to be paid to Pakistan, they were very happy.

15.233 The witness has tried to show that there was no conspiracy before the 13th January 1948 but it is not for this Commission to go into that matter.

15.234 As has been stated elsewhere, Gopal Godse denied Nathuram's going to Panchgani in 1944 to murder Mahatma Gandhi. Nathuram was not satisfied with Gandhiji's policies but it was not correct that Nathuram intended to kill Mahatma Gandhi in July 1947 and what he is alleged to have said could only be his annoyance with Mahatma Gandhi's utterances.

15.235 People were exasperated and they did want something to stop the massacre which was going on and the anti-Indian things which were being done in Delhi and the fast to give 55 crores was "the last straw which broke the camel's back".

15.236 If a strict watch had been kept and police from Ahmednagar, Poona or Bombay had closely watched the movements of Nathuram or Karkare or Apte, it is possible that this murder may not have been committed by them but that would not have prevented other people from doing the same thing. The feeling among the public was so much against Mahatma Gandhi.

15.237 He added that on 21st January 1948 the police did try to search for him at Delhi Junction and the train was delayed by half an hour but they never found him. Even Poona Police would not have been able to locate him because they did not know him. He said that what Mandalal told Professor Jain was wrong because there was no conspiracy at the time.

15.238 The conspiracy was not to kidnap Mahatma Gandhi but to kill him. The bomb was exploded to create commotion and divert the public and their attention and those of the conspirators who were sitting amongst the congregation would have killed Gandhiji by means of revolvers but the revolvers were found to be defective and the object was to be achieved by throwing hand-grenades. But there was a big crowd and hand-grenades would have killed others also. For that reason, Nathuram and Apte stopped the operation.

15.239 It was not correct that their party received money or arms from the *sardars* of Gwalior or they or the ruler had any connection with them. That allegation was absolutely false because by helping the conspirators they would not gain anything nor were they going to get back their *raj*.

15.240 Even if the conspirators had been arrested, others would have assassinated Gandhiji and nothing that the police could do would have prevented them. The feelings were at their highest and nothing would have saved him.

15.241 Maulana Azad had a great deal of influence over Gandhiji's pro-Muslim policies. Maulana Azad wanted Sardar Patel to leave so that he could induce Gandhiji to do many things for the benefit of Pakistan and Muslims in India. In his view, Gandhiji was misled by Maulana Azad in the matter of giving 55 crores. That was a position of no return and the consequences that followed were inevitable.

15.242 He said that Mr. M. D. Pathak, Advocate of Bombay, also took part in the demonstration against Gandhiji at Panchgani. He could also depose that Nathuram never went to Panchgani nor was there the incident of a dagger. In cross-examination he said there was no plan to murder Pakistan leaders.

15.243 He stated that on the 21st morning before the train started from the Delhi Junction, Madanlal was brought by uniformed police. He (Gopal) and Karkare were at the platform but Madanlal did not point them out. The only Gwalior man he knew was Dr. Parchure.

15.244 Nathuram and Apte used to go to Ahmednagar.

15.245 All the conspirators walked out of the prayer-meeting within five minutes of the ignition of the gun-cotton slab. There were a number of policemen at the Birla House on the 20th and nobody tried to stop the taxi in which the conspirators escaped. The taxi-driver also had a grievance against Mahatma Gandhi. He had come to know that they were responsible for the bomb.

15.246 Other witnesses who have deposed to the state of affairs and conditions in Poona are Messrs S. R. Bhagwat, witness No. 69, R. K. Khadilkar, M.P., witness No. 97, G. V. Ketkar, witness No. 1. Besides, there are the statements of Balukaka Kanitkar, Ex. 81, recorded by the police and his writings, Ex. 11, his letter to H.E. the



Governor General of India and his writings in the *Purushartha*, Ex. 166. They have been discussed in different chapters wherein they appropriately fall.

R. K. Khadilkar, wit. 97

15.247 As Mr. G. V. Ketkar, witness No. 1, had stated that he had talked to Mr. R. K. Khadilkar about what he observed and what he heard and about what Godse had told him, the Commission thought it necessary to examine Mr. Khadilkar who readily consented to appear before the Commission and his statement on this matter is very revealing.

15.248 When questioned about what Mr. Ketkar said about his talking to him, Mr. Khadilkar's (witness No. 97) reply was that he had no recollection of his travelling with Mr. Ketkar or Mr. Ketkar informing him of what Godse had said.

15.249 When questioned about what Mr. G. V. Ketkar had stated, his reply was that he was all the time under the impression that the local police intelligence which was under Inspector Angarkar, knew everything and he thought that they must have sent the necessary information to the authorities in Bombay. He also stated that after the first attempt, i.e., the incident of the bomb, they had come to know that Balukaka Kanitkar had taken the precaution of warning the authorities that there was a persistent rumour in Poona that somewhere some conspiracy was hatching in order to do away with the Mahatma.

15.250 He has deposed that there were rumours even before the first attempt of January 20, 1948 of a conspiracy being hatched in Poona to attack Gandhiji. The rumours were to the effect that something will happen to Gandhiji because he had succumbed to the pressure of those who favoured Partition; he was responsible for the giving away of 55 crores to Pakistan which was the proverbial last straw and people were decrying him and saying that "now there was no escape for him".

15.251 One instance of this objection to Mahatmaji which might be termed a not so violent opposition was given by this witness. He said that when before the Partition of the country and that was in August 1947, there was a proposal to hold a joint meeting of the citizens on the occasion of the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, and the Mahatma, who was in Poona at the time was to be invited to be the main or rather the only speaker and Mr. Shankarrao Deo, the Provincial Congress President, was approached to move in the matter, opposition came from the members of the Hindu Mahasabha, the militant people amongst whom led by Nathuram Godse said that they would under no circumstances agree to such a joint meeting and if it was held it would be disturbed. As there was this violent opposition to the joint meeting, the proposal was given up.

15.252 The following passage from the statement of Mr. Khadilkar is demonstrative of the atmosphere in Poona

"The atmosphere was highly tense and critical of Mahatma Gandhi though there were no open threats. But the writings

in the Press and the trend of the public speeches made as also of the private talk showed that people were very critical of the Mahatma because according to them he had betrayed India—they identified India with Hindus only—and would continue to betray the country in future. At that time there was a newspaper called the *Hindu Rashtra* which had taken the place of the *Agrani* in which this feeling was ventilated very clearly. There was another Hindu Mahasabha paper called the *Kal* which was also highly critical—of course, veiled criticism which showed a little bitterness."

15.253 The witness added that he was absolutely certain that before the first attempt was made but after the Partition and the giving of 55 crores, the atmosphere in Poona was highly poisonous and antagonistic towards Mahatma Gandhi and people thought that if he continued to live he would barter away the country to appease Pakistan, and the witness and people like him blamed the Government for not taking proper precautions against the movement which was afoot in Poona; and they blamed the Bombay Government more because they should have taken proper precautions. He repeated that the Poona Police intelligence was "with them"; they were sensing what was happening and what the atmosphere was and he and his friends could never imagine that they would not apprise the Government of what the true state of feelings was. After the giving of 55 crores the writings in the Press clearly demonstrated the extreme indignation and resentment of the people against those who had betrayed the country and it was not directed against the Muslims. The attention of this witness was drawn to what Mr. Dehejia, Secretary of the Bombay Home Department, had stated that the violent propaganda in Poona was anti-Muslim. To this his reply was that it was incorrect that the Muslims were the target of this resentment or incitement to violence; it was more correct to say that the sullenness and resentment was directed more against the Congress and particularly against Mahatma Gandhi. He admitted that none of them rushed to Bombay or to Delhi to warn the authorities but nonetheless they were anxious about the safety of the life of the Mahatma.

15.254 He was again asked about the warning given by Balukaka Kanitkar and he said that it was not that Balukaka had written during the period between the first attempt and the murder but only that he had already warned the Government about the danger to Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi. But he could not say that there was anyone who had given this warning during this period.

15.255 The witness has also said that for some time before the bomb was thrown, the atmosphere was surcharged with communal fanaticism but that was directed against Gandhiji who was considered to be the prime mover towards appeasement of Muslims.

15.256 The witness has given two reasons for not getting into touch with the authorities—one, that Inspector Angarkar, head of the 20—259 HA.

local intelligence, knew about it and he was under the impression that he would convey this information to the higher authorities in Poona, who would naturally relay it to the higher authorities in Bombay; and the other is that Balukaka Kanitkar had already sent the information to the Ministers in Bombay. Perhaps, an earlier information given to the authorities by people who were aware of the foul atmosphere and even to the local District Magistrate might have been more efficacious. He also said that if his information were definite, he would have run to Bombay and informed the Ministers at Bombay in spite of his being a "protestant against the Congress".

S. R. Bhagwat, wit. 69

15.257 Mr. S. R. Bhagwat, witness No. 69, in a letter, Ex. 115A, to Mr. M. G. Kanitkar, said that the late Balukaka Kanitkar had informed the late Mr. B. G. Kher and the late Sardar Patel about the plot to murder Mahatma Gandhi but no one believed him.

15.258 Mr. Bhagwat before this Commission said that Balukaka Kanitkar in one of his speeches said that the relations and friends of Nathuram Godse were saying that Mahatma Gandhi was in favour of Muslims and was not protecting the Hindu interests. He must, therefore, be removed. He should not be given any place or position where he could influence the decisions in regard to Pakistan but he did not say that people were saying that the Mahatma should be murdered.

15.259 Mr. Bhagwat added that he wrote personal letters to Balasahib Kher and Sardar Patel at Delhi telling them "from what I am noticing in the atmosphere all around me and from the movements that are being carried on, Mahatma Gandhi was (going to be) murdered. The atmosphere from which I sensed danger to Mahatma Gandhi's life were the speeches made by Balukaka Kanitkar and his friends and others". He could not remember exactly who those friends and others were but they told him that "I would hear something within about a week or so about Mahatma Gandhi's life". It was only Balukaka's speech about which he wrote to Mr. B. G. Kher and Sardar Patel but nobody believed him.

15.260 He met Mr. B. G. Kher before the murder and he told the witness that he did not believe that Gandhiji's life was in danger and that "I was imagining".

15.261 In cross-examination he said that Balukaka spoke about the existing situation about a couple of months before the assassination and he (Bhagwat) wrote to Mr. B. G. Kher, Mr. Morarji Desai and Sardar Patel because he was interested in the protection of Mahatma Gandhi's life. He thought it was sufficient to have written to the highest and it was not necessary to inform the police. He had copies of those letters but they had got burnt.

15.262 Mr. Morarji Desai was questioned about this and he replied that he did not remember anything about what Mr. Bhagwat had stated but if he, i.e., Bhagwat, says he wrote to him (Mr. Desai) then he must have done so.

15.263 This witness merely restates what Balukaka is alleged to have written to Mr. B. G. Kher. Even Mr. Morarji Desai admits that Balukaka did write something to Mr. B. G. Kher but no names were mentioned and the statement of witness S. R. Bhagwat does not carry the matter any further than what Balukaka wrote or said in his speeches.

15.264 The witness is rather vague about things. He says that he sensed danger in the atmosphere from speeches made by Balukaka and his friends whose names he does not remember but he says some people told him that something would happen to Mahatma Gandhi within a week. Was this statement made after the 20th January 1948 or before is not quite clear. Even on his own showing it is only Balukaka's speech about which he wrote to Mr. Kher and Sardar Patel. He does not seem to have said anything about what he was told by the friends of Balukaka. It is not quite clear why no information was given to the police except that the highest and the mightiest had been informed and so the people who were to do the actual investigation were by-passed and remained ignorant of Mr. Bhagwat's knowledge.

### Conclusion

15.265 Broadly speaking, there was a strong school of political thought in Poona which was associated with the Hindu Mahasabha, a part of it and yet ideologically different. This school has compendiously been called by Mr. K. M. Munshi as the Kesari group led by Savarkar. By Mr. Kamte it was called a group of Chitpawan Brahmins but it was not really anti-Gandhi. Even in this group there were some people who were willing to resort to political assassination and there were others whose activities might have consisted of strong anti-Muslim propaganda but they would not go so far as to commit a murder of political opponents.

15.266 The evidence which has been led before this Commission, particularly of officials, the Inspector General of Police, witness No. 4. N. M. Kamte, the Deputy Inspector General of Police of C.I.D., Bombay witness No. 3, U. H. Rana, the Assistant Deputy Inspector General of Police Rao Sahib Gurtu, witness No. 22, the District Superintendent of Police Mr. Pravinsinhji Vijaysinhji, witness No. 33, the Deputy Superintendent of Police N. Y. Deulkar, witness No. 6, the Inspector of Police, C.I.D., G. P. Angarkar, witness No. 68, almost unanimously shows that:—

- (1) the Hindu Mahasabha was strong in Poona;
- (2) there were bomb incidents; and
- (3) there were collections of arms in regard to which a number of searches were carried out and persons arrested.

But all these activities were directed against Muslims in order to drive them out of India and force them to go away to Pakistan or these activities were being carried on for the purpose of aiding with a supply of arms to Hindus across the borders of Hyderabad State where a struggle was going on against the Nizam's rule and the



depredations of the razakars. The evidence of these witnesses gives no indication of these activities being directed against the Congress or Mahatma Gandhi or other leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad etc. but emphasis their anti-Muslim and anti-razakar character.

15.267 It is true that people like Godse and Apte were carrying on propaganda against the Congress and even against Mahatma Gandhi but that propaganda was against Gandhism as they understood it, i.e., it was directed against Muslim appeasement policy of Mahatma Gandhi or giving away of 55 crores to Pakistan or the attitude of the Congress leaders towards the atrocities which were committed or were being committed on Hindus in western wing of Pakistan. All this produced a commotion in Poona, particularly among the Hindu Mahasabha circles and they were taking full advantage of those circumstances and were carrying on propaganda on the platform as well as in the Press and using it for the collection of arms, throwing of bombs etc. It might be that their propaganda was against the Muslims in the first instance but as Mr. Morarji Desai has said, it was meant to embarrass the Government also. And those of them who were more hot-headed like Godse, Apte, etc., particularly Nathuram Godse, who according to his brother Gopal Godse, witness No. 33, had taken a deep interest in the affairs of the country were greatly affected by the Partition and by the atrocities committed on Hindus.

15.268 Nathuram was also worrying about India's share of Defence equipment and they were exasperated and wanted to stop the massacre of Hindus. The fast of Mahatma Gandhi had produced a tremendous effect on him and was the "last straw which broke the camel's back". Gopal Godse has gone even further and said that even if Nathuram Godse, Apte and Karkare had been arrested, there would have been others who would have taken their place and would have finished Mahatma Gandhi Gandhi, showing though not saying so that conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi had larger ramifications than police investigation showed or were brought out at the trial in Judge Atma Charan's court.

15.269 The group which actually took part in the conspiracy to murder was the most militant group among the Hindu Mahasabha workers. They had formed a separate organisation called Hindu Rashtra Dal which from the evidence produced before the Commission was perhaps more militant than the R.S.S. and had implicit faith in the ideology preached by V. D. Savarkar which consisted of "Tooth for Tooth and Eye for Eye".

15.270 Mr. K. M. Munshi, witness No. 82, stated that Mahatma Gandhi had a tremendous influence so much so that any politician of any note could not remain out of his influence but the Savarkarites of Poona did not agree with him particularly in his non-violence. This school of thought, according to him, consisted of youngmen highly patriotic, devoted to the country, prepared to make any sacrifice required but as they were under the influence of Savarkar who advocated violence and believed in political assassination, they kept out of the Congress and were isolated when the masses began to follow Mahatma Gandhi and as a result of this difference, conflict

in political methods and the want of faith in Gandhiji or Gandhian methods, the school of thought known as the Kesari school had personal prejudice against Mahatma Gandhi. Savarkar never lowered his flag; he continued to believe in political assassination as a permissive method in achieving freedom. He believed that Hindus required a strong organisation to meet Muslim aggressiveness and they were apprehensive that the weak-kneed policy of the secular group in the Congress would be dangerous to the solidarity of the Hindus and would sap their strength. This class of people held Mahatma Gandhi responsible for the Partition of India and his unpopularity increased when at his instance 55 crores were given to Pakistan. There was a feeling amongst the Hindus particularly of this school that if the Mahatma had not adopted the policy of appeasement of Muslims there might not have been any Partition and at least the Hindus would have been spared the miseries to which they were subjected on Partition.

15.271 The documentary evidence relating to the state of affairs in Poona which have been placed before the Commission, shows that there was intense communal activity which the speeches made at Hindu Mahasabha public meetings proclaimed; but those documents, whether relating to Anti-Pakistan Day or welcome to Daji Joshi who had been convicted of murder of Jackson or about the importation of Sikh refugees or reports of bomb throwing or collection of arms, all had an anti-Muslim base. These did not show any anti-Congress leaning blatantly so proclaimed. But occasionally there were writings and speeches which had a different complexion, the speech of Dr. Parchure in Hindi on December 2, 1947 which was particularly directed against Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru and speeches the following day where the president, Mr. G. V. Ketkar, described Gandhism-cum-false nationalism as enemy No. 1.

15.272 The Agrani and its successor the Hindu Rashtra were writing violent articles and in two issues Ex. 233A and Ex. 233 the tone was particularly inciting and that in spite of the return of security to the Agrani on the Independence Day. These articles showed that this paper was not reconciled to Gandhian philosophy and was preaching Savarkar ideology.

15.273 To put it in seriatim the affairs in Poona might be summarised as follows:—

- (1) There was a tense atmosphere as there was a strong feeling against the Muslims which was aggravated by two factors —(a) atrocities committed on Hindus in Pakistan and (b) the atrocities committed by razakars in Hyderabad State.
- (2) Arms and ammunition were being collected particularly by members of the Hindu Mahasabha but as far as the evidence of official witnesses is concerned this was meant for use against the Muslims and for the protection of Hindus against the Razakars in Hyderabad State.
- (3) The feelings against the Congress were strong because of its Muslim appeasement policy and the feelings against

Mahatma Gandhi were no different but these people were not against him personally but only against his pro-Muslim policy.

- (4) Apte, Godse and Badge had come to the notice of the police but that was in regard to their activities against the Muslims. Even though Apte had been named as one of the persons connected with bombs, there is no evidence against him or against Godse of being violently inclined against Mahatma Gandhi, at least no information was collected by the C.I.D. in Poona or is discernible from the documents or from the evidence of witnesses.
- (5) There was no indication in Poona that there was going to be any use of violence against the Congress leaders still less against Mahatma Gandhi and certainly not to murder him.
- (6) There was violence in Poona, there was bomb throwing, a number of searches were made in the house of Hindu Mahasabha workers resulting in finding of arms, fire-arms etc. and even court cases were started but they were withdrawn, according to Inspector Angarkar, much against the wishes of the police and to their chagrin.
- (7) Some prominent members of the Hyderabad State Congress and State Hindu Mahasabha had settled down in Poona and they were getting the assistance of the Hindu Mahasabha in collecting arms which could be sent to Hyderabad State for use. According to evidence of Inspector Angarkar the Hindu Mahasabha and the socialists were more useful to these people than the Congressmen.
- (8) It may be added that the collection of arms was on a large scale and it was in one of the searches that an account book was found in which it was shown that Rs. 2,000 had been paid to Apte or Badge for the purchase of a machine-gun.
- (9) The Savarkarites which included Godse, Apte and Badge were against the policies of the Congress and of Mahatma Gandhi but there was nothing to indicate that they were against his person and they were not persons of sufficient importance to be shadowed or watched. As far as the police was concerned, the policy of the Agrani was anti-Gandhi and anti-Congress and pronouncedly communalist.
- (10) None of the police witnesses seem to have known that Madanlal had any associates in Poona still less that Godse was one of them. According to Inspector Angarkar if he had known it he would have followed Godse wherever he was whether in Poona, or in Bombay, or in Delhi.
- (11) Some non-official like the late Balukaka Kanitkar, Mr. S. R. Bhagwat, Mr. R. K. Khadilkar then of the Workers and Peasants Party and the late Mr. Keshavrao Jedhe,

M. C. A. and Mr. G. V. Ketkar did know that the atmosphere in Poona was surcharged and tense, the writings in the Press, the speeches on public platforms and private talks and rumours afloat portended danger to top Congress leadership particularly Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Nehru, Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad. Of these gentlemen, only two—Balukaka Kanitkar and Mr. Bhagwat—informed the authorities, Mr. B. G. Kher and Sadar Patel, but not the police or local authorities.

It is surprising that this information was not passed on by any authority to the C.I.D. for being vetted.

15.274 The police officers did not know in which direction the Hindu Rashtra Dal was operating. There is no indication in these documents showing any proper exercise of vigilance in regard to feelings of anti-Gandhism whether against the polices of Mahatma Gandhi of appeasing Muslims etc. or against him personally.

15.275 (a) Before the Delhi bomb explosion, no information was given to the Poona Police or the Provincial C.I.D. about the danger to the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Neither Mr. R. K. Khadilkar, nor Balukaka Kanitkar, nor Mr. S. R. Bhagwat, gave any information to the police.

(b) Whatever information the Bombay Premier or the Home Minister got from Balukaka Kanitkar or which they otherwise had relating to the danger to the life of Congress leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, was not reported to the police to be vetted by careful inquiry. This, in the opinion of the Commission, should have been done. Not doing it was an error.

(c) After the bomb was thrown at Birla House, no information as to what Madanlal had stated was given to Poona Police or Provincial C.I.D. nor were they asked anything about Karkare. If full particulars of an information about the latter could be obtained from the Poona C.I.D. after the murder, it could have been obtainable after the bomb explosion also.

(d) If it was possible, the services of Angarkar and Deulkar should have been called for earlier.

(e) Mr. Rana had seen the report about Madanlal and Karkare sent by Ahmednagar Police and even if he could not, while at Delhi, recollect anything about them, he could have, even as a precautionary measure, asked his office if there was any information about them.

(f) Even as late as the 28th January when Mr. Rana reached Poona in the evening, he met his officers. Rao Sahib Gurtu gave him the various names of persons whose description was given by Madanlal in his statement. He took no action on that information. No information was sent to Mr. Nagarvala or to Mr. Sanjevi or to Mr. Kamte. Nor did he take any precaution of immediately flying his Poona Police officers to Delhi to spot and watch the conspirators and, if possible, to arrest them. It is true Angarkar was sick and Deulkar was not there, but Deulkar could have been called to Bombay and



given instructions there to fly to Delhi along with other policemen. If he could not, for any reason, come to Bombay, the fault would not have been of the D.I.G., C.I.D.

(g) There is no indication of co-operation of Delhi, Bombay and Poona police officers to make a combined and co-ordinated effort to find the antecedents of Karkare and to find out who his associates were. As a matter of fact, there was a complete lack of co-operation between the various police forces.

(h) Ahmednagar Police had a complete record of Karkare and as to who his associates were. It was known at Ahmednagar that Apte was his associate and Godse also used to visit him with Apte. This information could have been worked out by the Poona C.I.D. as reports about Madanlal and Karkare had been sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D. The statement of Madanlal should have been sent to Poona by air and not sent by a circuitous route—Delhi—Allahabad—Bombay—Poona.

(i) It was a mistake on the part of Delhi Police not to have indicated to the Poona C.I.D. about Karkare direct and ask them to investigate. To leave it to Mr. Rana's slow process investigation was an error to which he also largely contributed by not informing his office. All these were contributory factors in facilitating the conspirators in achieving their nefarious design.

(j) The fault of the high ranking police officers at Delhi and of the Poona C.I.D. (Provincial) lay in complacency, thinking that the conspirators will not strike so fast. This was due to slow thinking and solvenly action.

15.276 The Commission is not oblivious of the fact that these police officers are making their statements 20 years or more after the events took place. Age and lapse of time affect memory and also enfeeble the mind, but even then broad facts such as tensivity of the atmosphere and feelings tending to violence against Mahatma Gandhi were not matters that could easily be forgotten or innocence about which could easily be explained by impairment of one's faculties. In judging the action of the police, it should not be forgotten that, now all the facts and loopholes are known which was not the case when these various officers were investigating.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Index of Paragraphs

16.3	D. M. S. objection refugees coming.
16.4	V. R. Karkare.
16.6	Balkundi's report about Karkare.
16.7	Razak's list.
16.11	Commission's narration of evidence and comments thereon
16.24	List of bombs throwers.
16.25	Narration and comments continued.
16.44	Suspicion about Madanlal.
16.51	Deshmukh goes to Poona and Bombay.
16.55	Dy. Supdt. Deshmukh (then S.I.).
16.58	Insp. Razak No. 34.
16.80	Sub. Insp. Rane.
16.85	Sub. Insp. L. N. Joshi.
16.96	Sub. Insp. Balkundi (Dy. S. P.).
16.106	D.S.P. J. S. Rane.
16.120	Mr. R. C. Joshi (D. M.).
16.135	Conclusions from evidence.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Ahmednagar

16.1 Documentary evidence regarding Ahmednagar shows that Karkare even in the beginning of 1947 was prominent among the Hindu Mahasabhaitees. He went to Noakhali and was making provocative speeches on Noakhali happenings. So much so that the District Magistrate made orders under section 144 Cr.P.C. against him and another. There is a later report showing that he was importing arms but people did not care much for him and the Muslims were dead against him and a strict look-out was maintained against him. This is shown by Exs. 257—259A.

16.2 The order passed by the Government of Bombay for the compiling of the list of Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. leaders was applicable to Ahmednagar also. Ex. 114A relates to that District and V. R. Karkare was one of the names therein mentioned. This was up to August, 1947.

16.3 On September 13, 1947, the District Magistrate of Ahmednagar Mr. H. A. Khan wrote to Government of Bombay, that coming in of ten thousand refugees into Visapur Camp would create communal disorder in the District which was hitherto free from communal trouble. This proposal was rightly criticised in the Secretariat office but ultimately the Minister ordered that some kind of restriction should be placed on the visitors to the camp and it should not be turned into a fair, which was likely to happen if no control was kept. Whether such an order was right or wrong or justified or not is not for this Commission to decide because the sole judge of what should be done in circumstances such as the ones that then existed was the authorities then exercising power. Law and order was their responsibility and nibbling at them is not conducive to orderly administration of agitating areas.

16.4 On 14th October, 1947, there was a note, Ex. 260(1), regarding news in the Hindu Rashttra that Karkare was called to the Police Station; several of his letters were confiscated; his specimen signatures taken and the people of the city were agitated about it but Karkare had not been arrested. But Government had "a strong eye on him". On 6th November, 1947, Ex. 212, from a house in Ahmednagar occupied by Hyderabad State Congress workers, arms were found. On the same day, the District Magistrate passed an order prohibiting bringing or transporting knives and other sharp-edged weapons into or through Ahmednagar City and Cantonment. (Ex. 148). The order under section 144, Cr.P.C. issued by the District Magistrate was extended by Government Ex. 149.

16.5 Ex. 266 dated January 22, 1948, is an extract from the Weekly Confidential Report of the District Magistrate. It shows that V. R. Karkare had gone to consult the Hindu Mahasabha leaders about the



future line of Hindu Mahasabha work and the local Hindu Mahasabha workers did not co-operate with him on account of his activities amongst the refugees. This appears to be an incorrect report because there is other evidence to show that Karkare had vanished from Ahmednagar before the 10th of January, 1948, and had gone on the nefarious task of murdering Mahatma Gandhi and not consulting the leaders about the future line of Hindu Mahasabha work. Ex. 227 dated 31st January 1948 shows that Karkare had been out of Ahmednagar for the last 12 or 13 days and he was reported to have paid a visit to the Refugee Camp at Chembur and was moving about in Bombay, which was only partially correct because he was not in Bombay but in Thana and was not moving about in Bombay. Ex. 228 is an innocuous kind of a report showing that Karkare had not been arrested under the Detention Order as he had absconded from Ahmednagar.

16.6 Ex. 67 dated January 29, 1948 is Sub-Inspector Balkundi's report to the D.I.G., stating that Madanlal appeared to be the same person who was operating in Ahmednagar and that he had left with V. R. Karkare "some 15 days back" and had not returned to Ahmednagar. Madanlal was a staunch R.S.S. member and was a revolutionary. But this report whatever its authenticity was a belated document.

16.7 On January 26, 1948 Inspector Razak sent a report to the D. S. Ps. of Ahmednagar and Poona including therein a list of persons named by S. V. Ketkar and other persons. These names had been obtained with the help of Inspector Savant of the C.I.D. presumably during the investigation. This report attached to Ex. 58—Razak's letter has the names of 25 persons amongst whom were S. V. Ketkar, V. R. Karkare, R. S. Rekhi and D. V. Godse. Amongst the Ketkar, Karkare and Rekhi were considered to be persons holding extreme views—whatever that word may mean. Two of them D. V. Godse and Chandekar were stated to be from Poona. S. V. Ketkar and Rekhi were connected with Karkare's Guest House and D. V. Godse was a brother of Nathuram Godse, and others were members of Karkare's amateur dramatic troupe.

16.8 In his testimony before the Commission Inspector Razak stated that nothing came out of this report but his investigation disclosed that Madan Lal was inclined towards violence. In the report no recommendation was made.

16.9 The importance of this document, Ex. 58 containing the list sent by Inspector Razak lies in this that a number of Hindu Mahasabha workers in Ahmednagar had some direct or indirect connection with Karkare—some were employed by him, others were members of his amateur dramatic troupe. Some of them had the reputation of having extreme views. But either this document was not seen by the officers to whom it was sent or its implications were wholly ignored. It does show this much at least that Karkare was an important personage in the Hindu Mahasabha movement. He was one of the persons who had extreme views. He had considerable influence in so far as the workers were either employed in his guest house or were collaborating with him in stage dramas and plays. Madan Lal was

also an associate of Karkare and he was not non-violent. From this one should have imagined that even if the objective of the local administration was only to keep the anti-Muslim feelings under control, a closer watch would have been kept on both Karkare and Madan Lal and the watch that was being kept on their movements or the trailing which was being done might have been a little more vigilant and stringent to be effective. It gives one the impression that whatever watch was kept was neither adequate nor efficient. What should be the extent of closeness of watch is a matter for which there is no evidence.

16.10 The incidental and happenings at Ahmednagar from an important link in the chain of events which culminated in the conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi. What was happening there was the precursor of that diabolical crime. The district of Ahmednagar borders on what was then the Hyderabad State and they had common borders of considerable length on the north and the east; on the other borders were the districts of Poona and Nasik. The political affiliations in this town and the district were, not to an inconsiderable extent, linked with the rather militant and none too non-violent activities of the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. and allied groups of Hindus. All its various activities, mostly anti-Muslim and directed against those who had what is popularly called a secular approach to national or local problems, were bound up with Poona which projected themselves into Ahmednagar and in other bordering districts of the pre-1947 Bombay Province.

16.11 The witness from Ahmednagar, who were examined by the Commission, were with the exception of one, Police officials and that exception was the Collector of the district Mr. R. C. Joshi, I.C.S., wit. 80. As a preface to this part of the report it may be stated that in 1947-48 there was a well organised, strong and extremely anti-Indian Razakar movement in Hyderabad State with its consequential reaction i.e., disturbances in that State and its repercussions in that part of British India which included Ahmednagar. According to Police District Superintendent Rane, witness No. 40, the Razakars trespassed into the district and indulged in violence by committing murders and arson in the border areas of Ahmednagar district. Consequently he had to visit the border areas several times; and was therefore absent from the headquarters quite often and for long periods because of the depredations of the Razakars resulting in excitement among the people of the district and the town of Ahmednagar. The Hindu Mahasabha agitation became intensified in Ahmednagar partly as a consequence of the Razakar trouble in Hyderabad State and partly because of the advent of a large number of Hindu refugees who came from that part of the country which became the western wing of Pakistan. As a matter of fact, Mr. R. C. Joshi, the then Collector of Ahmednagar, witness No. 80, has stated that his predecessor Mr. Khan had warned the Provincial Government that the bringing in of large number of Hindu refugees from West Punjab, Sindh etc., would create law and order problem because of resulting communal tension. But in spite of this advice, which must have been given from the best of motives but without realising the problem of rehabilitation of millions of displaced persons, about

10,000 Hindu refugees were brought to Ahmednagar and were given shelter in a former Jail at a place called Visapur, about 26 miles from Ahmednagar. These refugees had passed through blood, and fire and had come to India lacerated in body and soul, deprived of their worldly belongings and robbed of honour. The horrors they had been through are to horrible to relate here. One can take judicial notice of Mr. Justice G. D. Khosla's book "The Stern Reckoning". The unfortunate mass of humanity had to be sheltered and Visapur was as good a place as any other. It was a necessity and an aftermath of Partition and its two nation theory.

16.12 Among these refugees was one Madanlal Pahwa from Pakpattan, a tehsil town in Montgomery district of West Punjab, with an ebullient effervescent temper, who subsequently figured prominently in the conspiracy to murder Mahatma Gandhi, because he was the person who exploded the bomb at the prayer meeting of the Mahatma on the 20th January 1948 and was the first to be arrested.

16.13 This Madanlal came into contact with and was helped by Vishnu Ramkrishna Karkare who was also an accused in the conspiracy to kill Mahatma Gandhi. He owned and ran a hotel in Ahmednagar and used his position and influence to the fullest extent in inciting the refugees to take out processions and indulged in anti-Muslim activities. Their feelings and ire could in the circumstances be easily roused. They perhaps did not need much persuasion because expelled from the Punjab leaving their all there, they could not have been very happy to see their counterparts here enjoying their properties and pursuing their avocations and politics in peace and if necessary under official protection. Madanlal easily became an instrument which the conspirators were only too ready to employ.

16.14 Evidence, documentary and oral, relating to the happenings in Ahmednagar shows the trends in that part of the country. The conditions there were as said above complicated by communal tension a combined effect of the violent activities of the *razakars* both inside the District of Ahmednagar as well as in Hyderabad State, and naturally what happened in those districts and the disorders, robberies, arson and even murders which were committed by the *razakars* could not help in maintaining a peaceful atmosphere inside the District; all this accentuated the stresses and strains inside the district much to the bewilderment of the new administration and newly appointed and perhaps freshly promoted officers.

16.15 Besides the *razakar* activities and their consequences, the induction of refugees from West Punjab and N.W.F.P. became an additional factor which disturbed the communal atmosphere of the District and of the town of Ahmednagar. This is not to say that the refugees should not have been brought. But they were a problem though a problem resulting from the Partition. If the refugees were in an angry mood or in aggressive mood or asked for rehabilitation by insisting on jobs and business opportunities being given to them, one cannot blame them for it. After all it was not their fault that they had to leave their hearths and homes. It was the inevitable consequence of the Partition of India on the basis of Hindus and

Mahomedans being two nations and all the Hindus and other non-Moslems being driven away from West Punjab and other units of western wing of Pakistan.

16.16 As a counter-blast to the atrocities committed by the *Razakars* and what the refugees had gone through, the already strong Hindu Mahasabha movement got a fillip and an opportunity to become more aggressive and to operate in a more fruitful field. These must have added to the anxieties of the District authorities and must have given them some very difficult and even anxious moments. In judging what happened in Ahmednagar, the Commission cannot lose sight of the conditions created as a consequence of events to which a brief reference has been made above.

16.17 Mr. Morarji has stated, when his attention was drawn to the extension of the restrictions under section 144(6), Cr. P.C. Ex. 149, the original order was dated November 6, 1947 Ex. 148: "From this order, passed under section 144, Cr. P.C., I would not say that the general condition of the town was disturbed. I would say that there were some people who were determined to disturb the peace of the town. Therefore this precautionary measure had to be taken." He also said: "It is not correct to say that general population of Hindus was arming itself against the *Razakars*' depredations but some might have been doing it. The object of passing the order was to prevent people carrying arms. The Government was not in any way inclined to overlook the possession of arms even by those who were ostensibly doing it with the object of meeting the *Razakar* movement. I must add that there was no such movement in the town itself. What was happening was that people on the border were arming themselves with the help of the R.S.S. and that also only some people."

16.18 The order under section 144, Cr. P.C. dated 6th November, 1947 shows that it was to operate not only in the city and cantonment areas of Ahmednagar but in several other areas and talukas, in all 16. The letter of the District Magistrate dated 1st January, 1948 asking for extension which is based on the letter of the D.S.P. shows that due to communal situation in the Punjab and non-cooperation in Hyderabad State "fearful attitude" was arising among the people in the district, that there was danger of arms being imported in the district with a view to transporting them outside for the sake of protection to which was added his own opinion that the standstill agreement with the Hyderabad State had had no effect on the activities of the people from Hyderabad and reports of trouble were being received from areas on the borders and therefore extension was necessary. Here the dividing line between the effect of *Razakar* menace and refugee trouble gets obliterated and the two merge as it were. All this shows that anxiety produced by the *Razakar* movement was not confined to only a few people but was general in the district and that attempts were being made to import arms for protection as well as for export to meet this menace.

16.19 But evidence shows that there was a general apprehension of trouble from the *Razakars* from across the border. It may be true that everyone was not arming himself but people on the border in particular and some people in the interior were also getting arms—



whether it was actually for meeting the Razakar menace or not may be difficult to say—but there is not doubt that under the garb of fear of Razakar depredations arms were being collected.

16.20 There were at least four incidents of bomb throwing but they turned out to be directed against the Muslims particularly of the town of Ahmednagar, although the district authorities had been treating them as connected with the Razakars.

16.21 In the meantime, refugees in Visapur were getting restive. They wanted accommodation; i.e. houses to live in, shops to work in and employment and they were agitating, taking out processions to emphasise their demands. This is proved by the statement of Mr. R. C. Joshi, witness No. 80 and other witnesses from Ahmednagar particularly Mr. J. S. Rane, I.P., D.S.P. of Ahmednagar during the relevant period who has also stated that the refugees were agitating for the expulsion of the Mahomedans from Ahmednagar saying that the Mahomedans were getting the best of both the worlds. They did not like the Mahomedans having the facilities they were having in Ahmednagar while they, an uprooted mass of Hindus from West Punjab, were living on doles in an out of the way place like Visapur.

16.22 In the resume of the evidence produced before the Commission of witnesses from Ahmednagar, the various incidents have been given at great length and it will be unnecessary to repeat them except to mention them where it is necessary for the purposes of the report.

16.23 The evidence of the witnesses and the documents produced before the Commission show that four bombs were thrown in Ahmednagar town between November 24, 1947 and December 26, 1947. (See Ex. 61 and other relevant evidence).

16.24 The bombs thrown were as follows :—

- (1) 24th November 1947 on the Tazia procession in Kappad Bazar.
- (2) 7th December in Vasant Talkies.
- (3) 14th December on the house of Kazi Subhanbhai.
- (4) 26th December on the Tatti Darwaza Mosque.

In connection with these bombs, information was being sent by the District authorities to Government. On December 8, 1947, the District Magistrate wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government giving details of the bomb in Vasant Talkies and the extent of the damage done. A copy of this letter had been sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona. Thereupon Inspector Razak of the C.I.D., witness No. 34, was sent to Ahmednagar to investigate or to help in the investigation into the bomb incidents. By then there had been two explosions. Inspector Razak came and conducted his investigation and his evidence shows that the bomb explosions were caused by the workers of the Hindu Mahasabha but nobody had been arrested although Karkare and Madanlal who were both accused in the Gandhi Murder case were suspected to have been at the bottom

of these explosions. On December 18, 1947, he made a report (Ex. 61) stating that the bombs excepting the one that was thrown in Kappad Bazar which was different, were of the same type, similar to the bombs which had been found on June 3, 1947, in a bomb factory owned by Vansen Puspden in Bombay which had been unearthed by the Bombay C.I.D. and one of which was brought to Poona by a police officer Inspector Ranbhice and in connection with that find some Gujaratis had been arrested. This, according to him, showed a common source and a common agency operating. On December 24, 1947 (Ex. 62) the houses of the Secretary of the Muslim League and Captain of the Muslim National Guards were searched but nothing incriminating was found. The report of this is Ex. 62. This document also shows that the lives of Congress leaders including the local Secretary Mr. Saptrishi were threatened and that the bomb on the Moharram procession was similar to the one that was burst in Shanivart Pet in Poona.

16.25 As a result of these activities and the suspicion which the police had against Karkare and Madanlal, a watch was kept on their movements by plainclothes policemen but both continued making inciting speeches. Although they were directed against Mahomedans, they did not preach violence; so the evidence of witness No. 35, Sub-Inspector Rane shows. There were also police reports that these people were holding private meetings with the same objective. These activities were reported to the D.S.P.

16.26 Two reports were sent about the bomb incident in Kappad Bazar thrown on the shop of one Ismail, M.L.A. reciting what had happened and the damage which had been done. They are exhibits 73 and 74, dated December 15 and 16, 1947: the former by the District Magistrate and the latter by the D.S.P.

16.27 As a consequence of the suspicion which the police had on account of the throwing of the bombs, the house of Karkare was searched but nothing incriminating was found. According to the evidence of Inspector Razak, witness No. 34, it was as a result of this suspicion and on account of bomb-throwing that the house of Karkare was searched but evidently nothing was discovered. According to Sub-Inspector Deshmukh, witness No. 32, the houses of Karkare and S. V. Ketkar were searched under the orders of the D.S.P. by Sub-Inspector Rane, witness No. 35, and Deshmukh, witness No. 32, and after this the movements of Karkare were ordered to be trailed.

16.28 As a matter of fact, what seems to have happened is this: There was a murder of a widow in Poona. That was investigated by the District Police of Poona but evidently nothing came out of it and the investigation was closed and the case ended as being untraced but due to the persistence of a brother of the deceased woman, Inspector Savant, now Deputy Commissioner of Police of Bombay, was appointed by the Provincial C.I.D. to investigate the case. His investigation in Poona led to the association of the woman with S. V. Ketkar who was at that time in Poona but had after the murder of the widow shifted to Ahmednagar and was working as manager of Karkare's hotel. In that connection, on January 1, 1948, 21—259 HA.

there was search of the house of S. V. Ketkar conducted by Sub-Inspectors Rane and Deshmukh under the directions of Inspector Savant and a large quantity of arms and ammunition was found. The list of these is contained in Ex. 75. Besides arms and ammunition, some gold ornaments were also found. A list of that is contained in the report of Inspector Savant, Ex. 76, but it is necessary to set them out or enumerate them at this place. They, to put it briefly, consisted of country made handgrenades, a revolver, daggers, explosives, fuses, pistol and rifle rounds and other ammunition—all contained in a steel trunk of which the key was with Ketkar. Besides this, there was a nose-ring, ear-rings, a silver ornament box and letters. On January 2, 1948, the D.S.P., witness No. 40, made a report, Ex. 75, regarding the recovery of arms. It also showed that Ketkar had stated that these arms were kept in his house by V. R. Karkare; that handgrenades found in the house of Ketkar were of the same type as those thrown in Vasant Talkies and on the Tatti Darwaza Mosque in the previous month. Inspector Savant's report, Ex. 76, also mentioned the articles which were found therein and about the interrogation of Ketkar. A copy of this report was sent to the D.S.P. Ahmednagar, the original was sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona. Copies of the report, Ex. 75, were sent to the District Magistrate of Poona and Ahmednagar and to the D.I.G., C.I.D. and the Inspector-General of Police, Poona. Police Superintendent Rane, witness No. 40, has stated that he took no personal interest in the matter as it related to the C.I.D. This indeed would have been surprising if it had been literally correct. But the witness added that the District Police was also taking part and that under police practice he was sending reports to the Provincial Government. That explains the reason for sending Exhibits 74 and 75, i.e., relating to the bombs thrown in December 1947 and the recovery of the bombs on January 1, 1948 on search of S. V. Ketkar's house. On the same day, January 2, 1948, Inspector Razak sent a report, Ex. 77, informing his D.I.G., C.I.D. about the nature of the bombs thrown in Kappad Bazar Mosque and also that he had discussed the clues with the D.S.P. showing that that officer was kept fully informed of what was happening. Indeed, that is what one would have expected because the head of the District Police could not be ignored.

16.29 To revert to Ex. 76, report of Inspector Savant, it shows that Ketkar was arrested; he had named Karkare as the person who had given him the bombs; that the matter was reported to the D.S.P. and that information under Arms Act and Explosive Substances Act had been laid; that the searches of the house and hotel of Karkare had been conducted by the City Police Sub-Inspector under the orders of the D.S.P.; and that the interrogation of Ketkar did not disclose anything further.

16.30 The weekly confidential diary of the D.S.P. (Ex. 78) dated January 5, 1948 gives a description of the doings of the refugees from Visapur camp. It states that the Peshawar group of refugees from Visapur was committing robberies in the trains, the aggrieved parties being mostly Muslims for whose protection armed Railway Policemen had been put on duty. It also stated that the refugees had demanded and got the green flag on a mosque removed and they had also tried to remove other green flags from other Muslim buildings. There was a procession on 3rd January, 1948 led by Madanlal

2. Karkare and K. S. Kulkarni who were shouting anti-Pakistan slogans and demanding the expulsion of Muslims from Ahmednagar. The procession then proceeded to Sarosh Garrage owned by Khan Sahib Sarosh where they asked K. S. Sarosh to employ them in place of their Muslim employees. Sarosh discussed the matter with Madanlal and four other refugee leaders. The behaviour of Madanlal was very rude even when the District Magistrate and D.S.P. arrived there. The former explained to the refugees as to what they were going to do for them e.g., opening of a Co-operative Bank for them, but Madanlal was still very arrogant and the District Magistrate had to warn him against his rowdy behaviour. The report shows that Karkare was inciting the refugees to create trouble in Ahmednagar. Mr. Raosaheb Patwardhan who had gone to advise the refugees had to go back because of the attitude of the processionists. The report adds that it was learnt that Karkare was exciting the refugees and that the people in general did not like this rowdiness.

16.31 S. I. Balkundi who was then Sub-Inspector C.I.D. at Ahmednagar, made a report Ex. 66, on 4th January, 1948. It mentions about this very procession. It also mentions about the arrival of the D.S.P. and the District Magistrate. It states that Madanlal working with Karkare had arranged the procession and the real object of the procession was to protest against the searches which had been in the houses of Karkare and S. V. Ketkar and to put pressure regarding what was said to be the efforts of the police to get Karkare involved in the bomb cases by using third degree methods against S. V. Ketkar. The processionists also said that the police was after the Hindus and was frightened as it were of curbing the Muslims, that although searches had been made in the house of Karkare etc. yet no searches were made in the houses of Sarosh Irani and Ismail Bandhubhai although they possessed a good number of arms. This report support the incident in regard to the procession going to Sarosh Garrage and demanding the substitution of Hindus in place of Muslim employees and also of what the Collector and the D.S.P. did when they arrived at the spot. The significant part of this report is in the last paragraph at page 198 which is as follows:—

"It is learnt that this procession was arranged by Mr. Madanlal Kashmirilal who is a refugee but staying at Nagar with Mr. Karkare and working as a paid worker of Maha Sabha. The procession was taken out more or less as a protest for the search of the house and hotel of Mr. V. R. Karkare and to bring the pressure on Police in their investigation of the bomb cases."

In the end S. I. Balkundi suggested that in order to maintain the peace of the city Madanlal and Karkare should either be externed from Ahmednagar or detained. It also mentions that Katchi merchants were winding up their business and were intending to leave Ahmednagar and that refugees will take their place. Copies of this report were sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D., to the D.I.B., New Delhi, to the Home Department of Bombay Government, to the C.I.O., Bombay, and the I.G.P. This report was seen by the D.I.G., C.I.D. on

January 14, 1948 and exhibit 66-A, dated January 7, 1948 is a letter forwarding copies of this report from the D.I.G.'s office. In his letter of explanation dated February 9, 1948 (Ex. 69) S. I. Balkundi said that he had been sending weekly and special reports about Madanlal and Karkare and also that he had recommended the detention of both these persons as their activities in Ahmednagar had become more and more dangerous. S. I. Balkundi in his oral statement has supported the contents of his report and also that he had recommended detention or externment of these two individuals. Further he stated that Karkare was acting under the Hindu Mahasabha and that at that time he did not know Karkare's connection with Apte or Nathuram Godse. It may be added that in his report (Ex. 66) he had stated that Madanlal was a bad egg, was instigating the refugees, was conspiring and trying to contact the Sikh and Punjabi elements in the Army.

16.32 On the same day the District Magistrate and the D.S.P. made enquiries after receiving the report regarding the recovery of arms and ammunition from the house of S. V. Katkar whether Karkare had any hand in the bomb explosions in the city. There were references to the recovery of arms and ammunition from the house of Ketkar.

16.33 On January 5, 1948 a meeting was held at which Raosaheb Patwardhan, a well-known and respected Congress Socialist leader, addressed a meeting. This meeting was disturbed by the refugees including Madanlal. According to S.I. Rane (witness 35), Madanlal was in hot temper; while the meeting was being addressed he was shouting and threatening. S. I. Balkundi (witness 37) has also deposed about this incident. He has stated that Madanlal and his companions created disturbances during the meeting but it was not correct that Madanlal got hold of Patwardhan and tried to attack him with a knife. Karkare also arrived there and he also stated shouting and demanded that he and Madanlal should be allowed to speak. They tried to snatch away the mike from the rostrum. Thereafter the meeting ended and when the audience dispersed Madanlal and two others were arrested. Madanlal was kept in the lock-up for some time; and it was added that Madanlal used to create trouble all the time. Inspector Razak (witness 34) has stated that both Madanlal and Karkare were brought to the Police Station and interrogated there but nothing useful was found and there was no indication that their activities were directed against the Congress leaders or that they were conspiring against the lives of the Congress leaders. Madanlal on that occasion gave an undertaking not to take part in violent movements and he was let off. S. I. Balkundi (witness 37) deposed that on or about January 6, 1948 both Madanlal and Karkare disappeared from Ahmednagar and police had no information where they had gone. The police were on the look out for them and were watching the house of Karkare but to the knowledge of the witness Karkare did not return nor did Madanlal. The witness was sure that neither of them returned because the police was on the look out for them. As a matter of fact, it was S. I. Deshmukh (witness 32) who was on the look out for these people.

16.34 From the testimony of another witness Sub-Inspector L. N. Joshi (witness 36) who was a Police shorthand reported in Ahmednagar at the time, it appears that Madanlal had told him that he was going to Delhi to get married. This was on or about 10th January, 1948. This witness was quite friendly with witness No. 32 S. I. Deshmukh of the L.I.B. and did even accompany him to Poona when Deshmukh went to search for Karkare and yet he never told S. I. Deshmukh or any other police officer as to what Madanlal had told him about his going to Delhi to get married. There is sufficient corroboration of the fact that Madanlal had been saying that he was going to Delhi to get married. He had said that to Prof. Jain (witness No. 27). In his statement the latter stated that about a week before the bomb explosion at Delhi Madanlal came to him and told him that he was going to Delhi to get married and he would return soon. So that the recollection of Sub-Inspector Joshi about mention of the marriage is correct. Sub-Inspector Joshi has said that it was on or about the 10th January that Madanlal had told him about his intended going to Delhi. The dates may not be absolutely accurate but they tally to a very large extent and are sufficiently close to show that about a week or so before the bomb incident, Madanlal left Ahmednagar to go to Delhi and one of the police officers did have that information but for some reason or another the information was not conveyed by him to his brother or superior officers. We shall revert to this matter later.

16.35 On January 11, 1948 S. I. Deshmukh intercepted a letter by Karkare addressed to the "Dainik Trikal" and "The Hindu Rashtira" where Karkare gave information about the searches which had been effected in Ahmednagar in connection with the bomb incidents. The letter which was intercepted is exhibit 43, and was addressed to several newspapers in Poona including *Dainik Trikal* and *Hindu Rashtira*. It evidently was not dated; the date of interception is January 2, 1948. It states that eight days after the search of Karkare's house another search was made of that house on January 1, also of his tea house and Deccan Guest house. During the search Karkare and his staff were present but nothing objectionable was found in the search. Evidently one of the employees had a dagger which was returned to him when it was pointed out that it was meant for his protection. The reason given in the letter for this search was that Karkare was assisting the refugees and had therefore become an eyesore to the police and that the refugees did not like Karkare being treated in that manner. The letter also stated that one of the refugees made a speech and shouted "Swatantra Vir Savarkar-ki-jai", "Hindu Rashtira-ki-jai"; finally at Karkare's request the crowd melted away. The letter also mentioned the trouble which some of the visitors from outside and guests at the hotel had to undergo. It appears that there is some discrepancy in regard to the date when the interception took place. The witness has stated January 11, the letter seems to be of 2nd January but knowing as we do that Karkare was not seen in Ahmednagar after the 6th or so 11th January must be a mistake due to dimming of memory and lapse of time.

16.36 The weekly report of the District Magistrate, dated January 8, 1948 (Ex. 150) had reference to the recovery of handgrenades and other arms and ammunition from the house of S. V.



Ketkar and to his statement that Karkare had given them to him eight days earlier. On January 9, Inspector Razak (witness 34) advised Deshmukh, so that evidence of Razak shows, to recommend the detention of both Madanlal and Karkare. S. I. Balkundi (witness 37) has stated that he recommended—and that is proved by his weekly report also, dated 4th January 1948 (Ex. 60)—that Madanlal and Karkare be detained or externed.

16.37 On the report (Ex. 150), dated 8th January 1948 Mr. S. M. Dalal made an endorsement on January 11, and Mr. V. T. Dahejia on January 12, and on the same day the Home Minister Mr. Morarji Desai made an order that the persons mentioned in the report should be arrested and asked why the District Magistrate had not done so earlier.

16.38 As stated above, according to witness No. 37, S. I. Balkundi, the recommendation was made by him regarding Madanlal and Karkare on January 4, 1948 (Ex. 60). Madanlal was ordered to be detained on January 16, 1948. What happened between the period of the recommendation and the order of detention was passed, there is no evidence and it could not be said that on this point the officers were illuminating. But the matter is very old and perhaps their memory has got dimmed and one cannot blame them for it. Mr. R. C. Joshi, D.M. (witness 80) has stated that he had made the order because he was satisfied that Madanlal was acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance and safety of public order. He also made an order for the detention of three or four others but Karkare was not among them.

16.39 As a matter of fact the order for Karkare's detention was passed on the 24th January and the suggestion had come from Bombay Government to take action against him. The only remark that might be made at this stage is that even though the order was "semi-judicial" such long delay is inexplicable in a matter of preventive and not punitive action. It appears that in the Secretariat itself the order of the Minister ordering immediate arrest was delayed and it was not sent out till January 19, 1948 (Ex. 80). When it reached Ahmednagar is not quite clear but in Ex. 145, dated January 21, 1948, Mr. R. C. Joshi writing about the explosion of bombs and arrest of Karkare, refers to the letter of January 19, 1948. In that letter he said that the reason for not arresting Karkare was that apart from the statement of S. V. Ketkar, implicating Karkare, there was no other evidence to connect him with the offence and that the D.S.P. had explained that it was under those circumstances that Karkare was not arrested; and that the witness had informed the D.S.P. that in view of the Government's orders, Karkare should be arrested. He also said that according to the oral instructions of the Government he had ordered the detention of four refugees who led the procession in Ahmednagar on January 3. What happened between this letter and the order of detention of Karkare on January 24, 1948, is not quite clear. It will be more correct that there is no evidence on that point but ultimately orders were passed on the 24th for Karkare's detention. Mr. R. C. Joshi has stated that he did not know what statement S. V. Ketkar had made and in his explanation he was really giving the explanation of the D.S.P.

without giving his own opinion regarding sufficiency or otherwise of the reason for arresting or not arresting Karkare. This is rather fatuous. If Mr. Joshi was exercising his discretion or what he terms semi-judicial powers, he could not have acted on this material, but one cannot presume a misuse or abuse of powers of detention by a District Magistrate.

16.40 Both the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Chronicle*, newspapers from Bombay, gave the news as to the throwing of the bomb at Delhi, in their editions of 21 January 1948, Exhibits 106 and 107. There was some description of Madanlal as being a tall, wheat complexioned but it could not be said that it was very illuminating because that might fit in any Punjabi refugee. Besides in the *Bombay Chronicle*, Madanlal was described as "fair complexioned, medium built, Ex-Serviceman, wearing European dress". This description was equally unilluminating. Witness No. 32, S. I. Deshmukh, has stated that he had a complete record of Madanlal's activities and he knew him and if his photograph was sent to Ahmednagar or his description had been given, he would have at once spotted him and would have given a complete record of what he was doing and with whom he was associating. But even then from the description which the Press had given he told the D.S.P. Ahmednagar, of his suspicion about the identity of Madanlal but when he did it he does not now remember. S. I. Balkundi (witness 37) stated that from the description of Madanlal in the Press he suspected that he was the same person who was operating in Ahmednagar. He conveyed his suspicion to Inspector Razak who in turn informed the D.S.P. but what orders the D.S.P. made thereon he does not know.

16.41 The statement of the D.S.P. (witness 49) is that it did not strike him that Madanlal arrested at Delhi was the same person of Ahmednagar, but he had a faint recollection that Inspector Razak and S. I. Deshmukh had mentioned to him their suspicions about the identity of Madanlal. He told them that if that was so Madanlal must have been interrogated by the Delhi Police who would find out everything. He told Deshmukh that if he wanted to go to Delhi he could do so and also told Razak that on his return to Poona he might as well tell the D.I.G., C.I.D., about this suspicion. Surprisingly enough, this gentleman did not think it expedient to telephone the D.I.G., C.I.D., about it nor did he inform the District Magistrate. He also told S. I. Deshmukh to go to Poona to make enquiries about Karkare but this was soon after he had come to know that Karkare had disappeared from Ahmednagar. This according to the D.S.P. might have been on or about January 24, 1948, because a day or so earlier Deshmukh had come to see him. He has added that suspicion of Deshmukh with regard to Madanlal was not very strong and that was the reason he had not sent him to Delhi; and as he did not think the suspicion to be well founded, therefore he did not make any written report on this matter.

16.42 S. I. Balkundi (witness 37) had his suspicion about Madanlal and he made a report (Ex. 67), dated 29th January 1948 and sent it on to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona, in which he stated that this Madanlal seemed to be the same person who was in Ahmednagar and was working with Karkare and had disappeared from there. He gave

the full address of Madanlal and also something about his Punjab residence and some other particulars.

16.43 It is indeed surprising that this document should have been sent on 29th January 1948 by S. I. Balkundi and no report was made about it to the A.D.I.G. who was camping in Ahmednagar, round about that time. As a matter of fact, on 6th February 1948 (Ex. 68) Balkundi's explanation was called by Mr. N. S. Gurtu, A.D.I.G., on this point. There is some mistake in this document about the designation of the officer. It was not the D.I.G. but the A.D.I.G. who was camping in Ahmednagar at the time. The explanation of Balkundi among other things, was that he did not at the time know that the D. I.G. was there. Literally it is true. D.I.G. had not come to Ahmednagar, the A.D.I.G. had come. Between them it is difficult to believe that Balkundi would not know about it or that he would not go to him and thus not give such an important bit of information to him. Of course, the witness could have had good reason for it which he has not disclosed to the Commission. He further stated in his explanation that he had been reporting about the activities of Karkare and Madanlal and had recommended their detention because they were becoming more and more dangerous and that after the meeting of Raosaheb Patwardhan that was disturbed by these people, the atmosphere of Ahmednagar had become too hot and therefore they stopped their activities and left for Poona in the second week of January 1948, and since then Karkare had not returned to Ahmednagar.

16.44 If the evidence regarding the suspicion which the various witnesses had in regard to the identity of Madanlal is correct then Ex. 67 is a very important document, if true. This document, as stated above, is dated January 29, 1948. When it reached Poona, we do not know. What endorsements were made on it, that also we do not know because the original is not before the Commission. But there is no cogent explanation why Sub-Inspector Balkundi should have sent a written report on the 29th when all the time he was satisfied with having mentioned his suspicions as to Madanlal to Inspector Razak. It was this witness who had made a written recommendation for the detention of Madanlal and Karkare and he was watching their activities which shows that he was sufficiently alert as to what was happening in the town. But why he should not have sent a written report about his suspicion earlier is difficult to understand. His explanation for not sending report earlier is that he had talked to Inspector Razak and Razak had told the D.S.P. But still he wanted to put something in writing. On February 1, 1948, A.D.I.G. Gurtu called Balkundi to Poona in connection with the inquiry in Ahmednagar about Karkare. It appears that Mr. Gurtu did not know anything about the report nor does it seem to have been mentioned to him. As said earlier in his explanation, Ex. 69, dated February 9, 1948, Balkundi gave three reasons: (1) That he was not aware of the DIG's camping at Ahmednagar. Literally it may be true that D.I.G. was not there and it was the A.D.I.G. but why A.D.I.G. was not informed is not clear. (2) That the D.S.P. informed him (Balkundi) that he was wanted at Poona with full details regarding the relatives and servants of Karkare and the collection of that information had kept him busy and that he had handed over the information with

Karkare's photograph to Dy. S. P. Chaubal. (3) That he was constantly reporting about the movements of Karkare and Madanlal and had finally recommended their detention.

16.45 It is difficult to believe that the A.D.I.G. or the D.I.G. should be camping at Ahmednagar and a Sub-Inspector of CID would not know about it. It is also difficult to accept the explanation of not sending the report earlier. It is possible that this witness had a suspicion about Madanlal but like others in his force he acted in a rather slovenly manner. Of course, it must be mentioned that it may equally be difficult to find an explanation for putting in a false report at that stage. That it did go to Poona is proved by a subsequent document, a letter by the A.D.I.G. making a reference to this report. The Commission finds it difficult to accept that at such a late stage this document could usefully be written but at the same time it cannot come to the conclusion that this document is wholly a faked document subsequently introduced but its utility was nil and its objective difficult to find.

16.46 It is, of course, possible and even probable that Sub-Inspector Balkundi had suspicion about the identity of Madanlal. He might even have mentioned it to Razak who in turn informed the D.S.P. but the attitude of this witness does not show that this suspicion was so strong or really was anything more than vague or nebulous.

16.47 When Mr. Gurtu called Balkundi and asked him why he had not submitted his report about the activities of Madanlal and Karkare, his reply was that he had been sending reports from time to time and it was on this occasion that he brought this Ex. 67 from the record room and that is how it was produced.

16.48 From the evidence it does appear that S.I. Balkundi was aware of the activities of Karkare and Madanlal. It also appears that he did suspect that Madanlal, the thrower of the bomb, was the same who had been operating in Ahmednagar but for some reason he did not put his suspicion in writing and when he did so its utility was nil. It also appears that it was this witness who gave the particulars of Karkare to Poona C.I.D. and the photograph which was on the I.B. file was supplied by him.

16.49 Now, we come to another portion of the activities of the Ahmednagar Police.

16.50 Sub-Inspector Balkundi, witness No. 37, has stated that both Nathuram Godse and Apte used to come to Ahmednagar and they met Karkare and that he and his staff were watching the activities of both these persons although nothing emanated from this attempted intelligence. He also stated that he did not know if Karkare was sending any money to Godse and Apte. But he did know that Karkare was acting under the aegis of the Hindu Mahasabha. He further stated that when Madanlal and Karkare had left Ahmednagar in or about the second week of January 1948 as the place was too hot for them, he thought that he might have gone to Kolhapur to stay with one Jere who was one of the paid workers of the Hindu

Mahasabha. Now this is an important piece of evidence because in his explanation, Ex. 69, dated February 6, 1948, also he has said that Karkare, so it was learnt, had gone to Kolhapur and was likely to take shelter with one Mr. Jere who had been working at Nagar and that this information had been passed on to Inspector Razak who was working on it; but that unfortunately this was on February 7, 1948.

16.51 After Madanlal had thrown the bomb, a letter addressed to Karkare was intercepted by witness No. 32, Sub-Inspector Deshmukh. The writer of that letter could not be traced but in that letter it was written that a building had to be constructed in Bombay which was not possible without Karkare's help. Deshmukh took this letter to the D.S.P. and told him that it meant much more than what appeared on the surface. In other words, it was in code. A copy of the letter was sent by the D.S.P. to the DIG, CID requesting that inquiries be made in Bombay. Deshmukh suggested to the D.S.P. that he (Deshmukh) should go to Bombay and Poona to find out about the whereabouts of Karkare and he left for Bombay on the pretext of purchasing a rectophote machine, taking with him Sub-Inspector L. N. Joshi, because Joshi belonged to Poona and knew Apte and Godse. They went to the Agrani Press and made inquiries about Apte and Godse. This was on January 29, 1948. They were told that neither of them was in Poona. They then went to Apte's house on some pretext and asked Mrs. Apte about Apte's address. She said that Apte had gone to Gwalior. Joshi remained on in Poona and Deshmukh went to Bombay to find out about Karkare's brother who was working in a mill in Dadar. He made inquiries about Karkare till about 9 p.m. when he learnt about the murder of Mahatma Gandhi.

16.52 An extract from the weekly diary of Deshmukh, Ex. 53, shows that he arrived at Poona on 28th January, 1948 and made confidential inquiries till 11 p.m. On January 29, he made more confidential inquiries and left Poona at 11-30 a.m., arrived at Bombay at 4 p.m. and went to Kurla and made inquiries there and then returned to Dadar. On the following day, i.e., January 30, he moved about in Byculla, V.T., Kalbadevi, Dadar and Parel areas and made confidential inquiries. In this report it is not stated as to what confidential inquiries he was making or about whom, but one or two important matters emanate from this portion of the testimony of this witness.

(1) That Deshmukh had gone to Poona to look for Karkare; and if that was so it is difficult to imagine why he should have gone to the Agrani Press and asked about him and then there he made inquiries about the whereabouts of Apte and Godse. It is still very surprising that Deshmukh and L. N. Joshi should have gone to Mrs. Apte to find out where her husband was and then this witness (Deshmukh) should have left for Bombay to look for Karkare. The whole thing does not fit in or appear to be very logical. If Karkare was being looked for then the witness should have stated that they went to find out about him from the Agrani Press and from Mrs. Apte which he has not stated. And this connection between Karkare and the Agrani Press or Mrs. Apte should appear somewhere at least in the evidence before the Commission.

(2) It shows that the witness was connecting Karkare with Apte and Godse. Why it is not clear. He has nowhere stated in his evidence that according to his knowledge, Godse and Apte were associating with Karkare in Ahmednagar although Sub-Inspector Balkundi, witness No. 37, has stated that both Godse and Apte used to meet Karkare in Ahmednagar.

(3) If Karkare had taken shelter in Kolhapur with Jere, why was he being looked for in Poona? Besides why was the police in Kolhapur not contacted about him?

(4) It is difficult to find out any cogent reason for the inquiries made by these witnesses about Apte and Godse and not about Karkare. As has been said above, the thing does not fit in properly and picture seems to be out of focus as it were. Either these witnesses had knowledge about the association of Karkare and Apte and Godse or they had not. If they had, one would have expected that they would have informed the authorities about this matter and when Karkare disappeared from Poona, they might have looked for him at places where Apte and Godse were or they had no knowledge about this association.

16.53 But this much is clear that Sub-Inspector L. N. Joshi did know Mrs. Apte. As a matter of fact, he has stated that he had helped Karkare to start business and Karkare was helping Apte in his publication work. He has also stated that Deshmukh had suspicion that Apte and party had gone to Delhi but he does not seem to have mentioned the fact to anybody nor informed the D.S.P. He has further stated that Mrs. Apte had no suspicion when he made inquiries about Apte because they had known each other for some time. This previous acquaintance of Joshi with Apte and Karkare can have a sinister meaning and yet may be more or less innocuous. Joshi has stated that he had no sympathy for the Hindu Mahasabha. L. N. Joshi also stated that he accompanied Deshmukh because he knew friends of Karkare in Poona and went to the Agrani office for that reason. In the circumstances, it was, perhaps, not very wise for Mr. Deshmukh to have taken L. N. Joshi with him.

16.54 But the reason of his going to Poona and Bombay remains a mystery in view of his previous knowledge about the hiding of Karkare in Kolhapur with Jere.

16.55 Witness No. 32, Police Deputy Superintendent Narayanrao Kunjvihari Deshmukh, who was a Sub-Inspector in the Local Intelligence Branch at the relevant time was stationed at Ahmednagar to keep watch over the activities of different political parties including the Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. He has stated that to his knowledge there was no organisation known as Hindu Rashtra Dal in Ahmednagar. The leaders of Hindu Mahasabha were C. M. Satprishi and Gaikavadi but he had not heard the name of Apte but he knew Karkare. He used to visit Visapur refugees' camp where refugees from Peshawar had been brought—probably he does not distinguish the Peshawari Hindu from any other from West Punjab. There the talk among the refugees, as one would expect, was against Muslims; the complaint being that the Muslims had abducted, raped and



molested Hindu girls and young women in Pakistan and they were enjoying themselves in India while the refugees had suffered great indignity and barbarity at the hand of Muslims and had to come all the way from their homes in the Punjab to Ahmednagar nearly 2,500 kilometres away. They wanted service, jobs, business and they objected to living on Government doles and loans. One can well believe that they were work hungry, angry young men and passivity was not one of their virtues nor laziness their shortcoming. Madanlal and Karkare became prominent in the Hindu Mahasabha. In order to bring refugees into the Hindu Mahasabha movements Karkare promised them business and other kinds of help.

16.56 The refugees, led by Karkare, used to take out procession in Ahmednagar. On one occasion they took a procession to the Garage of Khan Bahadur Sarosh Irani. The District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police came to the spot. The District Magistrate promised them help but at the same time warned them that he would not allow them to misbehave by taking down green flags from the mausoleums and tombs of Peers and others and from other Muslim religious buildings. Thereafter the processionists went away. This was some time in the first week of January 1948.

16.57 This witness has referred to a circular (Ex. 54) which was issued by the D.I.G. of Police, C.I.D. on May 9/10, 1947, asking the District Superintendents of Police of the province to maintain a close watch on the Hindu Rashtra Dal's activities and to report to him any attempt made by its volunteers and others to implement the advice given by Barrister Savarkar at the meeting of the Dal at Dadar on the 9th and 10th May 1947. Accompanying this document is a precis of the summary of the proceedings of the Dal of that date at which about 125 volunteers were present from all over the province of Bombay and neighbouring Hindu States like Hyderabad, Kolhapur, Sangli, Miraj, Indore, Baroda besides others from the province of Bombay itself. Savarkar there delivered four speeches giving the aims and objects of the Hindu Rashtra Dal, its constitution and his views on the communal riots in India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. The aims and objects of the Dal were to propagate Hindu Sangathanist ideas. Savarkar was its dictator. He retired and nominated his successor who was authorised to nominate provincial and district organisers. During the course of his speeches Savarkar asked the volunteers to establish mass contact and propagate Savarkar-vad in the villages and to inculcate in the villagers a spirit of aggression; to protect themselves from Muslim atrocities; and also advised them to assist the villages to secure arms licences. He had emphasised the necessity of the Hindu Rashtra Dal and referred to Muslim atrocities in the Punjab and in Bengal, and preached retaliation. "You should not stop until you retaliate in the same spirit and manner. If Hindu women were raped and Hindu temples damaged, equal number of mosques should be destroyed. He advised the volunteers to oppose the Constitution if it was detrimental to the interests of Hindus and the "Hindudom".

16.58 In December 1947, said the witness, there were some bomb incidents but the local police could not find out, who were responsible for them. The Provincial C.I.D. was therefore called in from Poona but the culprits could not be traced or found.

16.59 According to this witness, on 1st January 1948, as is shown from his daily bulletin report there was a search in the house of Karkare and in the house of S. V. Ketkar, and large quantities of arms and ammunition were found. This search was conducted by Sub-Inspector S. S. Rane. Thereafter, Karkare's movements were watched and there was a policeman trailing him.

16.60 On the 11th January 1948 this witness intercepted a letter of Karkare addressed to the *Damik Hindu Rashtra* wherein Karkare had given information about the searches.

16.61 Letters of Karkare and other Hindu Mahasabha leaders in Ahmednagar began to be censored, i.e., outgoing and also their incoming letters. This witness was making reports in regard to these letters which he was intercepting.

16.62 On the 16th January 1948, orders were passed for the detention of Madanlal and on the 24th January for the detention of Karkare. It appears that both Madanlal and Karkare disappeared from Ahmednagar and they were never arrested till one after the bomb incident and the other after the fatal shot was fired which ended the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

16.63 The witness also stated that the activities of Karkare were not of a violent nature but he was taking part in the Hindu Mahasabha meetings. The witness never came to know about any secret meeting between Madanlal, Karkare, Apte and Godse; his duty being to make enquiries about illegal activities of persons, correlate them, and to submit them to the D.S.P.

16.64 Madanlal and Karkare disappeared in about the second week of January and the matter was reported to the D.S.P. and he must have informed the D.I.G. of Police, C.I.D. From what this witness knew the activities of Madanlal and Karkare were not directed against the Congress leaders nor did they attack them nor was there any indication of their intention to commit violence against them but they were anti-Muslim. He was not present at the meeting where Madanlal assaulted Raosahib Patwardhan but he went subsequently when Madanlal was brought to the Police Station. The witness intercepted a letter addressed to Karkare—the sender's name he did not know nor find out. In that letter it was stated that a building had to be constructed in Bombay and that without Karkare's help it could not be constructed. The letter was taken by the witness to the D.S.P. To the witness the letter meant much more than what it apparently said and it appeared to be in code. The letter was sent to the D.I.G. C.I.D. requesting that enquiries be made. This letter was received after the bomb was thrown at Delhi and before the murder. What became of this letter or what action was taken is not indicated by the evidence before the Commission.

16.65 The witness had a complete record of Madanlal's activities and he knew Madanlal. He says that if a photograph of Madanlal had been sent to Ahmednagar or had appeared in the newspapers or his description had appeared, he would at once have been able to spot

him and would have given a complete record of what he was doing and with whom. He stated that he had told the D.S.P. Ahmednagar of his suspicion about the identity of Madanlal; when exactly it was done, he does not say. On some pretext, on December 29, 1947, he went to Bombay taking witness L. N. Joshi who was a stenographer (witness No. 36) with him. They first went to Poona and made enquiries from the Agran Press about Apte and Godse who were known to L. N. Joshi but they were told that they were not in Poona. On the pretext of getting some books printed, they went to Apte's house and made enquiries from Mrs. Apte about Apte's address and she told them that Apte was in Gwalior. Leaving Joshi in Poona, the witness went to Bombay looking for Karkare in Dadar and heard the same evening at 8 p.m. that the Mahatma had been shot dead. He said that they had gone there because of their (Apte and Godse) association with the Hindu Mahasabha movement. It is a little surprising that this witness should have gone to enquire about Godse and Apte when he has deposed before the Commission that he did not know of any connection between Madanlal, Karkare, Godse and Apte. He also stated when his attention was drawn to his weekly movement diary that he left Ahmednagar on the 28th. He made enquiries at Poona the whole day and at 11 p.m. he left for Bombay and on that day he made confidential enquiries at Bombay on the 30th January learnt of the murder of the Mahatma and returned the same night to Ahmednagar. Even on the 29th January he did not know that Madanlal who had been arrested at Delhi was the same person whose activities they had been watching in Ahmednagar. Nobody had conveyed that information to him.

16.66 He did not go to the Bombay CID because they were not likely to know anything about Karkare who was only a hotel keeper and was not a big man.

16.67 This witness suspected that Madanlal who had thrown the bomb might be the same person about whom orders of detention had been passed in Ahmednagar and he told the D.S.P. about this also but he could not say whether that gentleman passed on the information to the Provincial CID. But this witness seems to be drawing more upon his imagination because in the latter part of the statement he has stated that even upto the 29th January 1948 he did not know that Madanlal arrested in Delhi was the same person whose activities they had been watching in Ahmednagar. Then it is difficult to see what he was going to do at Poona or at Bombay. At any rate there is no indication of what he did there except that he looked for Karkare. It is important to remember that Karkare's name had not been mentioned to this witness as an associate of Madanlal in the bomb throwing.

16.68 The next witness regarding Ahmednagar is Sheikh Abdul Razak Ismail (witness No. 34). He is now an Additional Superintendent of Police, C.B.I. (on leave preparatory to retirement) in charge of corruption. At the relevant time he was Inspector in the Provincial C.I.D. and was stationed at Poona and in charge of the circle including Ahmednagar. As there had been some bomb explosions in Ahmednagar he was called in on December 13, 1947 to Ahmednagar

to investigate these incidents (Ex. 60). There had been some bomb explosions, one of them inside the Vasant Talkies belonging to K. B. Sarosh Irani on 7th December, 1947. The other bomb incidents were in Kappad Bazar, Tatti Darwaza Mosque and one other on the occasion of the Muharram festival but nobody had been arrested in connection therewith although Madanlal and Karkare were suspected. On 18th December he made a report (Ex. 61) stating that the bomb was thrown on the Swari on 24th November, 1947 but it caused no damage because it did not explode. On 7th December, 1947 there was an explosion inside Vasant Talkies of a crude handgrenade which injured about 12 persons. On the 14th December, 1947, a bomb was thrown near the shop of Ismail Bandhubbai, M.L.A. which injured an onlooker. This was at about midnight. His report Ex. 61 shows that all these bombs except the one of Kappad Bazar which was different, were of the same type and were similar to the bombs which had been found on June 3, 1947 in a bomb factory in Bombay owned by one Vansen Puspens (Ex. 62) unearthed by the Bombay C.I.D. and were brought to Poona by a Police Officer and in connection with that case some Gujaratis had been arrested. This shows a common source and a common agency operating. According to a document (Ex. 62) dated 24th December 1947, the houses of Secretary of the Muslim League and Captain of the Muslim National Guards were searched but nothing incriminating was found. This document shows that the lives of Congress leaders including the local Secretary Satprishi were being threatened and that the bomb on the Muharram Swari was similar to the one burst in Poona Shaniwar Peth on 28th December 1947.

16.69 As a result of the suspicion on account of the throwing of the bombs, the house of Karkare was searched but evidently nothing was found. And Madanlal had no house. On the 2nd January 1948 this witness made a report (Ex. 59) showing that activities of Karkare were being watched, that Police Inspector Savant of the C.I.D. got certain information as a consequence of which the house of S. V. Ketkar was searched, from where some bombs and other arms and ammunition were found. Ketkar had stated that the bombs had been given to him by Karkare and the interrogation of one Shiru Limaye which had been ordered was cancelled. He was at the time in custody in Poona.

16.70 On 5th January 1948 both Madan Lal and Karkare were brought to the police station and interrogated but nothing useful was found and there were no indications that they or their activities were directed against the Congress leaders or they were a danger to the lives of Congress leaders but Madan Lal gave an undertaking not to take part in violent movements.

16.71 The witness on or about the 9th January 1948 asked Sub-Inspector Deshmukh to make a report and get both Madan Lal and Karkare detained. On 18th January the witness returned to Poona. Before that he had asked S.I. Deshmukh as to what had been done in regard to his suggestion of getting detention orders. Deshmukh's reply was that he had sent a report but no orders had until then been received. The witness was sending his reports from time to

time. He says it was for the higher officers to send Special Police officers to investigate the bomb cases.

16.72 On the 26th January 1948 (Ex. 58) he made a report to the D.I.G., Pooa, about the activities of 25 persons giving details. Copies were sent to D.S.Ps. of Pooa and Nagar. These contained names of persons some of whom S. V. Ketkar had "involved" in his statement. Of these some were active workers of a group holding "extreme views"; and two D. V. Godse and V. V. Pandit were from Pooa. About D. V. Godse it was mentioned that his brother was prominent in a dramatic society, but evidently no action was taken on this report, and it had recommended none. This report is Exhibit 58. The significant part of this report is that he had mentioned therein five persons S. V. Ketkar, V. R. Karkare, B. B. Paradkar, Rekhi and Dattaraya brother of Nathuram Godse. Their activities are very clearly given in this document, but there is no mention of Madanlal in this report and the witness says that he did not know about him. Anyhow it showed a probable source of the bombs thrown in Ahmednagar. Whether a more vigorous investigation could have led to anything more relevant to this enquiry before the Commission would be in the realm of conjecture. But this does show that Karkare was not a man whose activities could be ignored.

16.73 About 2 days after the bomb incident at Delhi this witness and S.I. Deshmukh went to the D.S.P. and mentioned to him their suspicions about the identity of Madanlal arrested at Delhi indicating that he might be the same person who was active in Ahmednagar but this witness has not mentioned it in any of his reports.

16.74 He has also stated that at Ahmednagar his investigation showed that Karkare and Madanlal were indulging in anti-Muslim activities. They had tried to incite the Hindus by showing a naked Hindu woman being outraged by persons who looked like Mohamadens. But he came to know that the photograph was that of a local prostitute who had been got hold of by Karkare and the photograph was manufactured in order to incite the Hindus against the Muslims. He has also said that he did not report this matter to the D.S.P.

16.75 He was cross-examined by Mr. Vaidya and he reiterated that he along with S. I. Deshmukh told the D.S.P. of their suspicions regarding Madan Lal and that the D.S.P. after the 26th January 1948 ordered Sub-Inspector Deshmukh to go to Delhi and search for Karkare and verify if Madanlal was the same person. He has also referred to a confidential letter written by the District Magistrate, Mr. R. C. Joshi (witness No. 80) to the Chief Secretary, Bombay with a copy to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Pooa. But this letter does not throw much light on anything excepting that the District Magistrate had reported about the bomb incidents which appeared to be of a communal nature, that the Police was investigating but it adds nothing to what this witness has already stated.

16.76 He could not remember whether he received any instructions from Mr. Rana, D.I.G., C.I.D. of the Province regarding the persons mentioned in the witness's report between 26th January and

and 30th January 1948 or even earlier. The witness wanted to arrest Karkare in connection with the bombs which had been found and he has deposed that his opinion was that if Madanlal was the same person whom they were looking for as he suspected then it might have led to the arrest of his co-conspirators. He produced a copy of a statement of Madanlal which was given to him on 2nd February 1948 and is marked Exhibit 65. It is a longish document and in type extends over 18 pages. He could not say whether there was any contact between Bombay City Police and the Pooa Police between 20th January and 30th January 1948 in regard to Madan Lal or the bomb thrown at Delhi.

16.77 In cross-examination by Mr. Chawla this witness stated that Madanlal and Karkare were associates in their activities against Muslims. But he did not know that Nathuram Godse or Apte were helping Karkare or Madanlal. He came to know of their activities between 20th January and 26th January and that is the reason why he has mentioned their names in his report. But surprisingly enough he did not know of the activities of Nathuram Godse or of Apte in Pooa.

16.78 When Karkare and Madanlal were brought to the Police Station on 5th January 1948 in connection with the bombs that were found in the house of S. V. Ketkar there were no indications that they were after the life of Mahatma Gandhi or other Congress leaders and Madanlal had given an understanding not to take part in violent movements. He further stated that he did not read any newspapers and when his attention was drawn to the description of Madanlal in 'Bombay Chronicle' he said that the description would not have been sufficient to enable him to connect Madan Lal with Madanlal of Ahmednagar. In the end he stated that if any of the Police Officers who knew Madanlal had been sent to Delhi it is possible that the murder of Mahatma Gandhi might have been prevented. It is surprising that this witness did not know anything about Apte or Nathuram Godse in Pooa.

16.79 His evidence and his reports before the Commission gives no indication that his energies were directed to anything other than enquiring into the anti-Muslim activities of Karkare and his conferrers. The mention of Nathuram Godse in the report is also indicative of his association with the Ahmednagar people in the same connection. The whole trend of the report Ex. 58 is towards showing association of these persons as members of an anti-Muslim movement acting in the guise of a dramatic society amongst other illegal activities. He has mentioned about the suspicion of Deshmukh regarding Madanlal. But his evidence is indicative of the disturbed condition of Ahmednagar with bomb throwing and Karkare and Madan Lal's association with these incidents and also that their activities were sufficiently prejudicial to merit detention.

16.80 Sub-Inspector Shantaram Sakharan Rana, witness No. 35, was stationed in Ahmednagar in 1947-48 as Officer-in-Charge of the City Police Station. He knew Karkare as a member of the Hindu Mahasabha whose activities became intensified after the partition of



the country in 1947. Karkare made propaganda against Muslims and "talked" against the Congress. He was associating and mixing with the refugees. The activities of such persons had, according to the witness, to be watched by the police.

16.81 The witness also knew Madanlal, a refugee at Visapur, who took a prominent part in refugees' processions and meetings. Madan Lal became acquainted with Karkare and was staying with him in his hotel. The activities of Madanlal were also anti-Muslim. In November and December 1947, four bombs were thrown in Ahmednagar—one on a procession of Tazias on the occasion of the Moharram; another bomb was thrown on a mosque; the third in Vasant Talkies; and the fourth at the Tatti Darwaza. Investigation into these incidents and the searches made by the police could not produce any results and the culprits could not be found. The propaganda carried on by Karkare and Madanlal and others was mainly directed against Muslims but was also against the Congress.

16.82 In December 1947, watch had to be put on the movements of Karkare and Madanlal. Both of them continued, however, making inciting speeches but they did not preach violence, not even against Muslims. Police also got information about the private meeting held by these people. In the beginning of January 1948 refugees took a procession to Khan Bahadur Sarosh asking him to give them employment. In that procession Madanlal and Karkare were present. The D.S.P. and the District Magistrate arrived there and asked the processionists to come over to his (D.M.'s) bungalow and discuss their grievances there. On January 5, 1948, there was a meeting held which was addressed by Raosahib Patwardhan. Madan Lal disturbed that meeting; he was shouting and threatening and was in "hot temper". Madanlal was arrested at the Patwardhan meeting and was brought to the police station and was kept there the whole night. Although the witness knew that Karkare was a companion of Madanlal he did not know anything about Godse and Apte nor did it strike him when Madanlal was arrested in Delhi that it was the same person who was creating trouble in Ahmednagar.

16.83 This witness made reports against Karkare. The movements of Madanlal and Karkare were being watched and plain-clothes policemen were deputed from November 1947 to do so. Orders for their detention were passed later on different dates in January. This witness was asked to be on the look out for them to arrest them. But about the middle of January 1948 or even a little earlier they disappeared from Ahmednagar and their whereabouts could not be traced. The police was giving information to the D.S.P. whenever any person left the jurisdiction of Ahmednagar City Police. No attempt was made to find out where Karkare or Madanlal had gone. All that the police knew was that they had gone out of their jurisdiction. The witness talked to Deshmukh about the vanishing of both Karkare and Madanlal but he already knew about it.

16.84 The point in this witness's evidence is that the movements of both Karkare and Madanlal were ordered to be watched from

November 1947 and they were even trailed but they managed to escape without anyone knowing when they went away or where. And as far as one can see, no attempt as made to find out where they had gone. This fact of vanishing was known to Sub-Inspector Deshmukh of the City Station. His evidence also shows that Madan Lal was hot-tempered and had assaulted Raosahib Patwardhan.

16.85 Witness No. 36, Lakshman Narayan Joshi is a D.S.P. attached to the C.I.D., Bombay C.B.I. He was working as a Sub-Inspector in the C.I.D., Ahmednagar, in 1947—50 under the D.S.P., Ahmednagar. His duties at the time were only to take down Marathi shorthand notes. There were no particular directions as to what meetings he should attend but he went whenever the D.S.P. ordered him to go. In the latter half of 1947, there was a great deal of commotion in the city and number of meetings were held and addressed by various leaders but the speeches of Karkare and Madan Lal were not recorded. The witness knew Madan Lal who told him that he was studying in a college. He also narrated to him about the conditions of refugees and their disabilities and also commented on the riots that took place in Pakistan. The witness did not know if Madan Lal took part in any violent movement. He never talked about any Congress leader from which it might have been gathered that he was anti-Gandhi or anti-Congress. He (witness) was specifically asked if the Ahmednagar Police was pro-Hindu Mahasabha or pro-R.S.S. to which he gave an emphatic reply that they were doing their duties impartially and even obtained warrants for the arrest of Madan Lal and Karkare.

16.86 On January 10, 1948, Madanlal told him that he was going to Delhi to get married. When the news of bomb throwing at Gandhi's meeting came on the radio or was published in the newspapers it struck the witness that it was the same Madan Lal who was in Ahmednagar and he talked to the Sub-Inspector about the suspicion. But evidently no use was made of this information, if indeed it was given. Secondly, when detention orders against Madan Lal were passed and he absconded, this witness gave no information of the absconding; or his going to Delhi assuming he knew of the detention orders. He also was searching for Madan Lal. Sub-Inspector Deshmukh had a similar suspicion and he went to speak to the D.S.P. about the identity of this Madan Lal. This was on or about the 24th January 1948. They both went to the D.S.P. but Deshmukh did the talking and Inspector Razak was also there. According to him the D.S.P. said that the Delhi Police would be coming to enquire and that they should not bother themselves about it but should arrest Karkare and get all the details of Madan Lal. What that meant the witness did not know.

16.87 On the 27th or 28th January, Deshmukh asked the witness to accompany him to Poona. Why it was five days or so later, he could not say. As he knew some friends of Karkare in Poona, that is why they went to Poona. They visited *Agrani* Press and some of Deshmukh's friends. While Deshmukh used to make enquiries, this witness used to stand outside. He does not know whether they went to Nathuram Godse's House but they did go to Apte's house, 23—259 HA

at about 15-30 or 16-00 hours, *Anand Ashram*. The witness went in and asked Mrs. Apte about the whereabouts of Karkare and she said that she did not know about Karkare but Apte had gone to Nagpur for publishing Savarkar's literature and from there he might have gone to Gwalior.

16.88 Deshmukh went to Bombay and the witness remained in Poona because he had some business in C.I.D. office. From their talk with Mrs. Apte, etc., they did not conclude that Apte and his friends had gone to Delhi. But Deshmukh did suspect that Apte and his Mahasabha friends with Madan Lal and Karkare had gone to Delhi. He also said that Inspector Abdul Razak was present when they went to see the D.S.P. but about this he was not quite sure.

16.89 The statement of this witness is rather important. Although he knew that Madan Lal had gone to Delhi, he gave no information to Sub-Inspector Deshmukh. If the movements of Madan Lal and Karkare were being watched and the witness knew Madan Lal, as he says he did, it is difficult to believe that he did not know that the movements of Madan Lal were being watched. Besides he took his meals at Karkare's hotel and so did Madan Lal.

16.90 Another matter which is rather important is this that he knew Apte's family because Apte's father and his father were school friends as students and were on visiting terms.

16.91 The witness was a ticket collector at the railway station when Apte was a teacher in the Mission High School in Ahmednagar and he had helped Karkare with money to start a hotel. He says he knew Karkare but was not a friend of his. He says that he did not know about the activities of Karkare nor did he enquire from Deshmukh as to why Karkare was being chased by the police on the ground that that was not within his province. Nor did he ask after the D.S.P. had ordered that search should be made for Karkare. About the middle of January he came to know that there was a warrant to arrest Karkare, that he did not ask Deshmukh about the activities of Karkare because that was none of his business. Nor was it his business to find out whether Karkare was in Ahmednagar when orders for his detention and warrants to arrest him were issued. He knew that Inspector Razak wanted Karkare to be detained and both Razak and he were staying at the Police Club.

16.92 Deshmukh had asked the witness to go with him to Poona in order to help him and the witness went to Poona partly for that and partly for his official duties which he had with the C.I.D. office there. Nobody at the office asked him about Karkare. He visited Apte's House at about 3-30 p.m. but he did not know anything about Godse but he did know about the relations between Karkare and Apte. Karkare was helping Apte in his publication but he was not sure whether Karkare was financing the project. He went to Apte's house because he knew about the relations between the two; he did not know anybody at the *Agrani Press*. He asked Mrs. Apte if her husband was insured on the specious plea that one of her friends

Yadarkar was an insurance agent and he asked Mrs. Apte about her husband and others going to Delhi, because Deshmukh was asking him to do so.

16.93 But from the information given by Mrs. Apte he did not conclude that they had gone to Delhi, although his companion Deshmukh had such suspicion.

16.94 The witness says that he did not know about the activities of Karkare although he was friendly with him since 1937. He did not know that Karkare's house was searched in connection with bomb explosion and yet in the next breath he says that he knew that Karkare's house was being searched in connection with bomb explosions, and that Inspector Razak had come in that connection. He has admitted that he knew Mrs. Apte and her husband since long and that his friend wanted to get insurance of Apte but he does not know what company his friend was an agent for. He did hear Razak and Deshmukh talking about the detention of Karkare.

16.95 This witness was friendly with Karkare. He had helped him to start a hotel. He had been friendly with Karkare for ten years and it is difficult to believe that he did not know about his (Karkare's) activities. He also knew Apte and was aware of the fact that Apte and Karkare were friends. He knew that Karkare was out of town and yet he gave no such information to the police when the police was looking for him. He also knew that Madan Lal was leaving for Delhi, this information he did not give to the police. He had gone to Poona to find out Karkare some of whose friends he knew there.

16.96 Police Deputy Superintendent Anant Shamrao Balkundi, witness No. 37, is now the Deputy Superintendent of Police C.I.D. Aurangabad. From July 1945 to July 1948 he was a Sub-Inspector, C.I.D., at Ahmednagar and his duty was to watch political activities of persons and parties and submit reports. In about the middle of 1947 a refugee camp was established at Visapur near Ahmednagar. Karkare who was a Hindu Mahasabha leader took the earliest opportunity of working amongst the refugees. He incited the refugees against the Muslims and held *Morehas* in Ahmednagar. As a result of his activities Madan Lal and some other refugees were attracted towards Karkare and they also started taking part in Hindu Mahasabha activities. They led black flag processions. From the Mausoleums and tombs of *peers*, etc., they removed green cloth coverings. There were also bomb explosions from about the middle of 1947, one of which was thrown in Vasant Talkies which created panic amongst the public. The object of these activities was to scare away Muslims and force them to quit which was one of the objectives of the party. As a result of these activities Madan Lal Pahwa came into lime-light and his movements began to be watched by the Police. As the activities of Madan Lal and Karkare were dangerous, this witness made a report to the D.I.G., C.I.D. on January 4, 1948 for their detention or extermination. On the same day a report (Ex. 66) was made by this witness which shows that a

procession of refugees carrying lathis and hockey sticks and shouting slogans against Muslims was led by Karkare, Kulkarni and Madan Lal. They passed through the Muslim localities shouting that Muslims should be driven away. They were also shouting that the Police was maltreating S. V. Ketkar who had been arrested in connection with the possession of bombs, fire-arms and ammunition and that the reason of this maltreatment was to make him involve Karkare as the real possessor of these things. This procession, according to the report, was arranged by Madan Lal who was staying with Karkare and was a leading worker of the Hindu Mahasabha and its real objective was to protest against the searches of the house and hotel of Karkare and to pressurise the Police in regard to the bomb case investigation to stop or soften it. The report states further that Madan Lal was a bad-egg who instigated the refugees; the recommendation was that Madan Lal and Karkare should be detained or expelled from the city so that they do not do any mischief. The report also stated that Muslims were getting nervous and that Katchi merchants were winding up their business to leave the city.

16.97 There was a public meeting on 5th January, 1948 and one of the speakers was Raosahib Patwardhan. Madan Lal and his companions created disturbance at this meeting but the story that Patwardhan was got hold of by Madan Lal and he attacked or attempted to or wanted to attack Patwardhan was not correct. However, both Karkare and Madan Lal were shouting that they wanted to speak. They snatched away the mike from the stage and the meeting then dispersed. Two or three persons including Madan Lal were arrested. Madan Lal was kept in the Police Station and evidently nothing more was done in regard to the incident at the meeting; that from about the 6th January 1948 both Madan Lal and Karkare disappeared from Poona. But the witness could not remember if he mentioned this in his report to the D.I.G., C.I.D. The house of Karkare was being watched but the witness did not know whether he returned or not. Madan Lal, however, did not return to Ahmednagar. An order for detention of Karkare and Madan Lal was passed but the witness does not know when and nothing of importance took place upto 20th January 1948.

16.98 When on the 20th January a bomb was exploded at Birla House at Mahatma's prayer meeting and the matter was reported in the Press this witness suspected that Madan Lal therein described was the same person who had been carrying on activities in Ahmednagar. He conveyed his suspicion to Inspector Razak who in turn informed the D.S.P. but what orders the D.S.P. gave, the witness does not know.

16.99 On 29th January 1948 and it is not clear why it is so long after the news appeared in the Press the witness sent a report (Ex. 67) to the D.I.G., C.I.D. The purport of this report was that from the description which appeared in the Papers about Madan Lal who was arrested in Delhi it appeared that this Madan Lal was the same person who was operating in Ahmednagar and creating trouble. Madan Lal and Karkare had left Ahmednagar fifteen days earlier

and had gone to Bombay but their further movements and whereabouts were not known and it was worthwhile making enquiries from Delhi Police about Madan Lal who according to the report was a staunch Sanghite (R.S.S.) and had revolutionary ideas.

16.100 This (Ex. 67) is a very important document if it is a true document. This report has no endorsement on it of the office of the D.I.G. of its receipt or what happened to it. This witness had not made a report in writing about the absconding or disappearance of Madan Lal or Karkare. The explanation of the witness about not sending his report earlier is that he had talked to Inspector Razak. If that was sufficient one fails to see the necessity of making this report on the 29th January, 1948. The A.D.I.G. was camping at Ahmednagar about this time but no report was made to him while he was there. On 1st February 1948 Mr. Gurtu, A.D.I.G.P., C.I.D. Poona called witness to Poona in connection with the enquiry in Ahmednagar about Karkare. There Gurtu gave him certain instructions about Karkare. But Mr. Gurtu did not know anything about the report nor does it seem to have been mentioned to him.

16.101 The next piece of evidence which is of importance in connection with this witness is his explanation dated 9th February 1948 (Ex. 69). He stated therein (1) that he was not aware of the D.I.G.'s camp at Ahmednagar; (2) that he could not make arrangements for interrogation of Ved Prakash on 1st February 1948 because of disturbances in the city; (3) that the D.S.P. informed him that he, the witness, was wanted at Poona with full details regarding the relatives and servants of Karkare and the collection of that information had kept him busy and he had handed over the information along with Karkare's photograph to Deputy Superintendent Chaulai; (4) that he was constantly reporting about the movement of Karkare and Madan Lal through weekly and special reports and had finally reported about the detention of both of them on 4th January 1948; (5) that after the meeting of Raosahib Patwardhan on 6th January 1948 the atmosphere at Ahmednagar had become too hot for Karkare and Madan Lal and therefore they had disappeared from Ahmednagar; (6) that Karkare had written to his wife that he would be arriving during the course of the week and strict watch was being kept at the Railway Station and motor stands; (7) that Karkare had gone to Kolhapur where he was likely to take shelter with a Mr. Jere.

16.102 This document has already been discussed at a previous page and it is not necessary to deal with it again.

16.103 Another important piece of evidence which emanates from the statement of this witness is that Godse and Apte both used to come to Ahmednagar and met Karkare and that this witness and his staff were watching the activities of both Apte and Godse in Ahmednagar although nothing emanated from this attempted intelligence. The witness did not not know if Karkare was sending any money to Godse and Apte. And he had no information about any plot being hatched in Ahmednagar.



16.104 This witness was cross-examined both by Mr. Vaidya as well as by Mr. Chawla. He was asked about the search into the house of Ketkar where arms and ammunition were found but he does not remember whether he was present when Ketkar was interrogated. He was asked if he had made any report in regard to Karkare's connection with arms and ammunition and his reply was that he could not say anything unless he saw the report. Now this is a very peculiar answer. If a report was made the question would not arise and if no report was made there was nothing that this witness could see. The witness was asked about the activities of the Hindu Rashtra Dal but he said that he could not remember.

16.105 The evidence of this witness shows that both Karkare and Madan Lal had earned notoriety in Police circles because of their anti-Muslim activities and the incitement to refugees and also in regard to the bombs which have been thrown; that Madan Lal had disturbed the meeting of Raosahib Patwardhan in a disorderly manner. He was arrested in connection therewith but what happened next one does not know; that the activities were of such a prejudicial nature that this witness had to recommend the externment or detention of those two persons as early as 4th January 1948; that soon after both Madan Lal and Karkare vanished from Ahmednagar in spite of the fact that a Police watch was being kept on them and that this witness had a suspicion that Madan Lal arrested at Delhi was the same person who had been operating in Ahmednagar. He conveyed his suspicion to Inspector Razak who in turn gave the information to the D.S.P. If this statement is true and it might well be no one seems to have done anything in regard to the suspicion possibly because it was not considered well founded. However, the most important bit of information that this witness has given is that both Apte and Godse visited Karkare and there was information with the Ahmednagar Police therefore that these two persons were co-workers in the Hindu Mahasabha with Karkare and even their movements were watched but with negative results.

16.106 Jagannath Shivram Rane, witness No. 40, was the D.S.P. at Ahmednagar during the period October 1947 to April 1948. His evidence shows that during that period there were two main problems which were occupying the attention of the police in the district: one, the Razakar trouble in Hyderabad State and the other the Hindu Mahasabha agitation in Ahmednagar town itself. The State of Hyderabad was in Razakar turmoil. That trouble had given an exciting time to the police because the people used to come from Hyderabad State and were causing excitement. Some Razakars were arrested. The witness had to go to the border areas often because of a number of incidents of arson and murder committed by the Razakars and sometimes he had to stay there for long periods which meant absence from the headquarters. One can well understand that the Razakar problem was causing serious and acute anxiety to the District administration in respect of areas bordering Hyderabad State—good bit of Ahmednagar was surrounded by territories of Hyderabad State. Those areas of that State which are called Marathwada now from part of the Maharashtra State after the linguistic readjustment and territorial changes.

16.107 Hindu Mahasabha agitation also was another trouble spot. There was a section of the local population which were its protagonists and then there were refugees from Pakistan who were agitating for the expulsion of Muslims who, the refugees said, were getting the best of both the worlds. They did not like the Muslims having the facilities they were having. In that agitation Madan Lal had started taking and did take a leading part—pulling down green flags from Durgahs, mausoleums and other Muslim places of worship. The local man connected therewith was Karkare. The movements of both these persons were being watched by the Intelligence Branch. The reports showed that the agitation by Karkare and Madan Lal was directed against Muslims; and the bomb incidents which had taken place were also directed against them. These incidents were reported to witness by the intelligence staff. The investigations into the bomb incidents had been infructuous although directions used to be given by this witness as to what should be done.

16.108 There were searches made in Ahmednagar in connection with possession of illicit arms. Therefore, the houses of S. V. Ketkar and V. R. Karkare were searched and in the former's, some explosives, a pistol and a revolver and ammunition were found and as a result Ketkar was arrested and was sent up for trial and convicted. But the search of Karkare's house did not result in finding any incriminating article.

16.109 There were no reports to the witness of Madan Lal and Karkare making anti-Congress speeches or propaganda. But they were kept under watch. The Sub-Inspector who kept watch over Karkare and Madan Lal sent daily reports to the witness but in his (witness's) opinion the watch was kept because of Hyderabad. It is unfortunate that the witness was not asked to explain what he meant by "because of Hyderabad". But in his note at the time of signing his statement he has said that it was not because of Hyderabad but because of their attitude towards Muslims, which makes more sense.

16.110 Warrants were issued for the detention of Madan Lal and Karkare on the report made by the Provincial C.I.D. Evidently, the D.S.P. was not consulted. But the detention according to him was because of their anti-Muslim activities, and as far as one can see had no connection with their anti-Congress tendencies.

16.111 There are some reports made by this witness and others to the Government which would merit mention at this stage. On 15th December 1947, the District Magistrate made a report (Ex. 73) to the Government of Bombay on the bomb explosion on the 14th December near the shop of Ismail, M.L.A. in Kappad Bazar. On the 16th December, the witness made a report (Ex. 74) to the Government about the same bomb incident. On 2nd January 1948, this witness made a report (Ex. 75) regarding the recovery of arms and ammunition on the previous day from the house of S. V. Ketkar. It also shows that Ketkar had stated that these arms had been kept in his house by V. R. Karkare from whose house, when searched, nothing incriminating was found. The report also shows that the

grenades found in the House of Ketkar were of the same type as those thrown in Vasant Talkies and on the Tatti Darwaza mosque in the previous month. In this connection, reference may also be made to Ex. 76 dated 2nd January 1948, by Inspector Sawant under whose direction the search was conducted in Ketkar's house, about the articles found therein and about the interrogation of Karkare. A copy of this report was sent to the D.S.P., Ahmednagar, the Original to the D.I.G. of Police, C.I.D., Poona.

16.112 This witness stated in reply to a question by the Commission that he did not take any personal interest in these searches as it was a C.I.D. matter. This detente would be surprising if true. But he added that the District Police was also taking part and that under police practice he was sending reports to the Provincial Government. That would explain his reports Exs. 74 and 75 above-referred to. Ex. 76 also shows that Ketkar was the Manager of Karkare's hotel and that among other things found at the former's house were some ornaments also—these ornaments resembled those which had been removed from the body of the woman in Poona, in regard to whose murder Inspector Sawant was making investigation although Poona Police seemed to have closed the case as untraced. Why the clues arising from the recovery of ornaments was not followed up one does not know. At any rate, it would only fall within the purview of this inquiry showing what the local police was doing in regard to this group of Hindu Mahasabha workers.

16.113 Ex. 77 is a report by Inspector Razak showing that the bomb thrown on the mosque within the city police jurisdiction was similar to the one with regard to which he had made previous reports; that he had discussed the case with the D.S.P. and the various clues that were being followed up; and that the activities of Karkare were being watched. The report also said that instructions had been given to the city police for the interrogation of one Shiru Limaye at Poona whose connection is not clear.

16.114 Ex. 78 dated 5th January 1948 is the weekly diary of the witness. It shows that Madan Lal and Karkare had been inciting the refugees and that they wanted Muslims to go away from Ahmednagar. It also stated that Madan Lal was very rude in his behaviour.

16.115 On January 19, 1948 as Ex. 80 shows the District Magistrate was directed by Government that Karkare should be arrested in connection with the arms found in the house of Ketkar and that they also wanted to know why he had not been detained earlier.

16.116 About the warrants for the detention of Karkare the witness stated that they were issued on the reports made by the Provincial C.I.D., that he was not consulted in the matter and that their activities were only in regard to Hyderabad for which they were being watched by the police. In cross-examination and in his clarification the witness stated that the investigations into the arms and ammunition and incidents connected therewith were being made by the Provincial C.I.D. It has been suggested to him that the

bombs found in the house of Ketkar had connection with the previous bomb incidents. He also said that he did not recommend the detention of anybody in connection with these bombs because he did not think the matter sufficiently serious as to merit detention under an extraordinary law. In his clarification, he said that he did not think that the detention of these persons was on account of their activities against Hyderabad but a consequence of their anti-Mahomedanism.

16.117 The witness stated that it did not strike him that Madan Lal who was arrested at Delhi was the same person who was operating in Ahmednagar although he had a faint recollection that Inspector Razak and Sub-Inspector Deshmukh had mentioned to him that they suspected him (Madan Lal) to be the same person. The witness told them that if that was so then Madan Lal must have been interrogated by the Delhi Police who would find everything out. He told Deshmukh that if he wanted to go to Delhi he could go and also told Abdul Razak that on his return to Poona he might as well tell the D.I.G., C.I.D., about Madan Lal. But he himself did not think it necessary to telephone the D.I.G. about it nor did he inform his District Magistrate about it. He also told Deshmukh to go to Poona and make enquiries about Karkare but this was soon after it was known that Karkare had disappeared. This must have been on or about the 24th January 1948, because a day or so earlier Deshmukh came to see him. Deshmukh's suspicion according to the witness was not very strong and therefore the witness did not send him to Delhi. Personally, he did not think the suspicion to be wellfounded and so he did not make any written orders in regard to the matter.

16.118 Ex. 77 shows that Inspector Razak, witness No. 34, had discussed the bomb cases with this witness and the clues that he had followed. It also shows that Karkare's movements were being watched. It is surprising, however, that although the offences fell within the Explosive Substances Act which is a serious matter and searches were made in connection therewith, this witness did not take any serious interest in the matter. Of course, it is possible that he was more concerned with what was happening on the Hyderabad border or what was happening in Ahmednagar town itself owing to the influx of refugees there and the Hindu Mahasabha carrying on anti-Muslim agitation.

16.119 But one thing seems to be clear that higher authorities in the district did not know or attach importance to the association of Karkare with Apte and Godse about which evidence has been given; and that a facade, unknown to the Police, had been created for the illegal operation of this group which culminated in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

R. C. Joshi, *id.* 80

16.120 Quite a valuable bit of information was given by Mr. Ramchandra Chintaman Joshi, I.C.S., witness No. 80, now Secretary, Revenue and Forests Department, Bombay, who was the Collector and District Magistrate of Ahmednagar from November 1947 to February 1951. His evidence shows that there was considerable communal tension in the District as well as in the town of Ahmednagar one of the main causes being the presence of refugees from the western wing



of Pakistan. These refugees were lodged at a place called Visapur about 26 miles away from Ahmednagar. They have been described as "certainly not non-violent and quite turbulent". Another reason for communal tension was incidents connected with *razakar* activity in the neighbouring Hyderabad State which incidents affected both the District and town of Ahmednagar.

16.121 As a matter of fact, Mr. Joshi's predecessor, Mr. H. A. Khan, on September 13, 1947, made a report to Government pointing out that the coming of about 10,000 refugees from the Punjab side would create a difficult communal situation and he suggested that the visits by local leaders to the camp should be restricted and speeches relating to Punjab atrocities should be prohibited. He also pointed out that Ahmednagar District was on the borders of Hyderabad State and people from that State were frequently coming to Ahmednagar and were carrying on propaganda there; that up to that time the District was free from communal disorders but if no check was kept on the activities of the refugees, it was likely that communal agitation would flare up.

16.122 This gentleman, Mr. H. A. Khan, on November 6, 1947, issued an order under section 144, Cr. P.C. prohibiting the importation, transportation or sale of consignments of knives and other sharp edged weapons like daggers, spears, axes, either by post, railway or other means of conveyance without the previous permission of the Magistrate. This is Ex. 148. Mr. Joshi sent a report to the Government requesting extension of that order under section 144(6), Cr. P.C. for an indefinite period (this is Ex. 149) and the order was extended. The refugees in Visapur were getting restive. They wanted houses and employment and they were agitating and taking out processions to emphasise their demands.

16.123 There was throwing of bombs in Ahmednagar town; there were four bomb incidents:

1. 24th November 1947 on the Tazia procession in Kappad Bazar.
2. 7th December in Vasant Talksies.
3. 14th December on the house of Kazi Subhanbhai.
4. 26th December on the Tatti Darwaza mosque.

These activities, this witness did not suspect as being directed against the life of Mahatma Gandhi nor could he have any such suspicion. There was a procession on 3rd January, 1948 in which Madan Lal took a prominent part. This witness was receiving weekly reports from the police and was sending weekly reports to Government.

12.124 Some of the documents which have been exhibited before the Commission and to which the attention of this witness was drawn may well be referred to at this stage. Documents about the orders by Mr. Khan and the extension order under section 144(6) have already been referred to. On December 15, 1947, Mr. Joshi made a report to the Chief Secretary of Bombay Province and a copy of it was sent to the D.I.G., C.I.D. This is Ex. 73. It relates to the bomb which was thrown in Kappad Bazar. This place was inspected by

Mr. Joshi and he has set out the damage that it had caused and also the measures which had ordered to be taken by the C.I.D. and the D.S.P.

16.125 On January 2, 1948, Inspector Savant made a report to the D.I.G., C.I.D., Poona giving the facts of the case in regard to S. V. Ketkar against whom there was suspicion of murder of a woman in Poona. This is Ex. 76. S. V. Ketkar was at that time working as a manager of Karkare's boarding houses. S. V. Ketkar's house was searched and quite a number of handgrenades, revolvers, daggers, fuses, explosives and ammunition were found. Besides this, some gold and silver ornaments were recovered and S. V. Ketkar was arrested. His explanation to the police was that about a week earlier all these things had been given to him by V. R. Karkare who was a Hindu Mahasabha worker. The matter was reported to the D.S.P., Ahmednagar. A report was lodged under the Arms Act and Explosive Substances Act. Karkare's house was also searched but evidently nothing incriminating was found there. The possession of explosive substance is rather a serious matter but there is nothing to indicate that this report was sent to the District Magistrate or was seen by him. Mr. Joshi has stated that the D.S.P. had informed him of the recovery of bombs from Ketkar's house and about the search conducted at his house. S. V. Ketkar was prosecuted under Explosive Substances Act and as no prosecution can be entertained without sanction, this witness must have seen the report. The matter is 20 years old and it may be that the witness cannot now remember it.

16.126 Ex. 66 dated January 4, 1948, is a confidential report sent by Sub-Inspector A. S. Balkundi showing the taking out of a procession by the refugees on January 3, led by Karkare, Kulkarni and Madan Lal—the first two being Hindu Mahasabha workers and the latter a refugee. They were shouting slogans against Pakistan and Muslims and '*Savarkar ki jat*'. The object of this procession was to put pressure on the police because of their searching Karkare's house and it was being said that Ketkar was being maltreated and pressurised in order to force him to implicate Karkare. This document also refers to the procession marching to Khan Bahadur Sarosh's Garage and their leaders being received by Sarosh and the arrival of the District Magistrate and the D.S.P. The District Magistrate tried to pacify them by promising help but at the same time was firm against their illegal activities. The District Magistrate has stated that Ex. 67 was not brought to his notice. After his attention was drawn to Ex. 66 of 4th January and Ex. 67 of January 29, 1968, the later was also a report of Sub-Inspector Balkundi, the witness said that he had met the processionists at Sarosh's Garage, but he did not know about Ex. 66; nor was Ex. 67 brought to his notice. Ex. 67 mentions the fact that Madan Lal arrested at Delhi was probably the same person whose activities were being watched in Ahmednagar.

16.127 On January 8, 1948, the witness submitted his weekly report which is mentioned in Ex. 150. In this document it is stated that S. V. Ketkar from whose possession the arms and ammunition were found had stated that the articles had been given to him by Karkare for being kept in his house about 8 days earlier thereby involving Karkare. This information was conveyed to Mr. Morarji



Desai through the Home Secretary, Mr. Dehejia, on January 12, 1948, and the same day Mr. Desai passed the following order:

"Immediate arrest of the persons concerned should have been made re: 'A' and 'B' pp. 2 and 4 (B. refers to Karkare). Why was this not done? The D.M. might detain these people even now."

It appears that in pursuance of this order, the witness passed an order for detention of Karkare on January 24, 1948. The letter from the Home Department, Bombay to the witness directing him to make immediate arrest of Karkare and asking him why he had not done so earlier is Ex. 80 dated January 19, 1948. It is not explained why an order made by the Home Minister on January 12 directing immediate arrest of Karkare was not sent from the Bombay Secretariat till the 19th January and why the order for detention was not passed earlier than the 24th January if it had to be passed at all. Either the activities of Karkare were prejudicial to the safety etc. of the public or they were not; if the former, immediate action was necessary and if the latter then no action should have been taken. The witness, in reply to the letter of the 19th asking him to explain why he had not arrested Karkare earlier, sent his explanation which is Ex. 145 dated January 21, 1948. In this the witness has stated that the reason for not arresting Karkare was that apart from the statement of Ketkar implicating Karkare there was no evidence to connect him with the offence and the D.S.P. did not think that to be sufficient for the arrest of Karkare. On this statement the action against Karkare was uncalled for. It shows some very slow thinking and slower action. The activities of Karkare, even on the evidence before this Commission, were not very peaceful or even legitimate. This hesitancy of the district authorities has remained unexplained. If preventive powers under extraordinary laws are meant for the preservation of law and order, then the situation created was such that they should have been used unless the situation in Hyderabad was such that the use of these powers would have added to commotion and general insecurity. The Commission cannot ignore that aspect of the evidence before it. But there is no evidence submitted to justify the conclusion that the hesitancy was partly or even wholly attributable to the Razakar depredations. The document also mentions that according to the oral instructions sent to him he had ordered the detention of four refugees who had taken part in the procession on January 3, 1948.

16.128 Sub-Inspector Balkundi, witness No. 37, has stated that he made a report to D.I.G., C.I.D., recommending the detention or externment of Madanlal and Karkare by his report Ex. 66 dated January 4, 1948 but he did not know when the orders were passed. This document which is before the Commission is a copy and does not show what happened to it in the C.I.D. office and when it was sent to the District Magistrate at Ahmednagar or the D.S.P. or whether the orders were passed on the basis of this document.

16.129 The order detaining Madanlal is Ex. 42 dated January 16, 1948. This again is not clear why if the Government order was on January 3 and report of Sub-Inspector Balkundi was on January 4,

1948, this detention order was delayed for such a long time. If the Government had given oral instructions for detention on the 3rd, unless there was something very special on which the District Magistrate wanted to be satisfied under the law, there does not seem to be any reason why the detention should have been so long delayed. Either the refugees who were ordered to be detained were acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public safety or they were not. If they were, one would have expected immediate orders to be passed and if they were not, then the exercise of the powers was improper, if not *mala fide*.

16.130 At this stage, it may be added that the Government does not seem to have asked Mr. Joshi as to why Madanlal's detention orders were issued so late or why he was not arrested but they did evidently make an inquiry as to the reasons for and the circumstances under which Karkare managed to escape from Ahmednagar and according to Sub-Inspector Balkundi, witness No. 37, he and Madanlal disappeared from Ahmednagar on or about the 6th January. This event must or at least should have a place in the Police Weekly reports which unfortunately have not been produced.

16.131 The explanation of Mr. Joshi is Ex. 146 dated February 7, 1948. Therein it is stated that the report of the finding of arms was received by him on January 3, 1948 and he was making enquiries from the District Superintendent of Police as to whether Karkare had any connection with the bomb explosions but he was told that with the exception of Ketkar's statement there was no evidence. The investigation had been entrusted to the Provincial C.I.D., Poona, who did not keep him in touch with the investigation and it was not due to his mistake that Karkare escaped from Ahmednagar. He left Ahmednagar as soon as Ketkar was arrested and his escape was mainly due to the inaction of the C.I.D. but even then he himself felt thoroughly ashamed but he had ordered the detention of 5 refugees and also he had ordered that whereabouts of Karkare should be traced out.

16.132 The witness was also asked about Ex. 67 dated January 29, 1948, a document about which reference has been made in the evidence of Sub-Inspector A. S. Balkundi. In this document, Balkundi had reported to the D.I.G., C.I.D. that Madanlal who had been arrested in Delhi might be the same person who was operating in Ahmednagar. The District Magistrate evidently had not seen this document because it was never brought to his notice and he has stated that he did not know or suspect Madanlal who was arrested at Delhi of being the same person as the one who was in Ahmednagar and that it was after the murder that it became a common knowledge that amongst persons who were connected with Mahatma Gandhi's murder, were Madanlal and Karkare and that they were the same persons against whom detention orders were passed by him.

16.133 Some orders had been given about the detention of some persons connected with R.S.S. and it was with regard to them that this witness talked to Mr. Morarji Desai and that was after the murder. If the use of telephonic communication was possible after the murder, it was equally so before and it is difficult to see why the

Government did not convey its orders for detention using that vehicle of communication. But it was not done and that can only be explained on the usual secretarial procedural red tape of having everything in writing. The witness has stated that Ex. 145 which he sent to the Government was really the explanation of the D.S.P. which had been given to him and that he himself was very unhappy about the incident. In his view, Karkare should have been arrested on S. V. Ketkar's arrest. But there is no explanation why it was not done. Most of all, if Madanlal and Karkare were indulging in unlawful or harmful and prejudicial activities, why proper watch on them was not kept and when they disappeared why no alarm was given or information sent to the Provincial Police to trace them.

16.134 Also why no such action was taken after the warrants for detention became impossible of execution is not explained.

16.135 The evidence of witnesses from Ahmednagar shows that (1) there were bomb explosions there; (2) there was a strong anti-Moslem movement there; (3) the refugees were restive and wanted to be rehabilitated; (4) the Hindu Mahasabha was using the refugees for their own ends; (5) arms were found from S. V. Ketkar's house which he alleged had come from Karkare; (6) the D.S.P. did not think the explosive substances cases to be serious; (7) Karkare had association with Godse and Apte of which the police was aware; (8) there was a full record of Madanlal's doings in Ahmednagar with the Police; (9) Madanlal when arrested at Delhi was suspected by Ahmednagar police to be the same who was operating in Ahmednagar; (10) the D.S.P. was apprised of this suspicion but it was either not well founded or was not taken seriously; (11) Bombay Police did not seek any information from Ahmednagar Police regarding Karkare or Madanlal; (12) Karkare was acting under the aegis of the Hindu Mahasabha but Sub-Inspector Balkundi did not know whether he was sending money to Godse and Apte. Balkundi also stated that Godse and Apte used to meet Karkare at Ahmednagar. Their activities were watched but nothing was found against them. (13) Sub-Inspector Balkundi also stated that he was called to Poona by Mr. Gurtu and his report dated February 9, 1948 shows that he gave the information which was required from him. He gave a photograph of V. R. Karkare to Dy. Supdt. Chaulab on February 3, 1948. He went to Poona on February, 7 as a result of a wireless message summoning him to Poona.

16.136 This evidence shows that had efforts been made earlier either by the Delhi Police or the Bombay Police the complete record of Karkare as well as of Madanlal would have been available and if a photograph had been published in the newspapers, the Police of Ahmednagar would have come to know about him and would have been in a position to give the information. Commission would like to add that issuing photographs of arrested persons is not always a very wise mode of investigation because of the fear that identification parades or identification by witnesses might be held to be valueless.

## CHAPTER XVII

### Razakar Movement

17.1 The statements of Ahmednagar district officials give a fairly clear account of the *Razakars* and their depredations and spoliation activities and the consequential effect on the people of the district.

J. S. Rane, wit. 40

17.2 The statement of Mr. J. S. Rane, witness No. 40 (page 412), who was the D.S.P. of Ahmednagar from October 1947 to April 1948, shows the conditions prevailing in Ahmednagar during his term of office. He has stated that he had an exciting time because of the Hyderabad problem which was due to people coming from Hyderabad and causing excitement. He arrested some *Razakars* and had to go to the border areas because there were a number of incidents of arson and murder committed by *Razakars*; sometimes he had to be away from the headquarters for long periods and stay at the border areas.

R. C. Joshi, wit. 80

17.3 According to the District Magistrate Mr. R. C. Joshi, witness No. 80 (page 2), there was border trouble due to Hyderabad because of frequent acts of violence of the *Razakars* against the people of Ahmednagar District which the Police had to watch. So prominent was the *Razakar* trouble in the minds of the district officials that they, the District Magistrate, Mr. R. C. Joshi, and others, connected the bomb thrown on December 8, 1947, with it. Mr. Morarji Desai, Witness No. 96 has also stated that it was not the general population which was arming itself but the people on the border with the help of the R.S.S. and that there was no such movement in the town itself. This statement of Mr. Morarji Desai tends to minimize the disturbed and troublous conditions resulting from the *Razakar* movement, but it is difficult to imagine that only a fringe of the population in these border districts were agitated by *Razakar* depredations though perhaps only a few suffered as a result thereof. This is all the more so as it was agitating the whole country practically. He was dealing with the *Razakar* movement in his official capacity. He stated, "the *razakar* was creating a kind of commotion amongst certain sections of Hindus in these two districts specially because the *razakars* were indulging in raids into the border villages of these two districts", the two districts referred to in the statement being Ahmednagar and Sholapur. The District Magistrate of Ahmednagar evidently did think that the trouble of the borders of the Nizam's State was serious and so did the D.S.P., so much so that even the bombs thrown in Ahmednagar were taken by these gentlemen to have a *Razakar* origin. The reports of these officers contained in official files show the seriousness of the situation.

17.4 The report of the District Magistrate dated December 12, 1947 shows the disturbed conditions resulting in murder, arson, cutting of crops, lifting of cattle and molestation of women. There was a mass attack on village Khandoi on Ahmednagar borders. On January 8,



1948 there was firing on village Jainpur. The weekly letter of January 12, 1948 shows the number of murders, rapes, etc. in Hyderabad State itself which could not but cause commotion amongst the Hindus of the bordering districts if not of the Hindus of the whole Maharashtra area as also in the rest of India.

17.5 *Razakar* trouble in Hyderabad State, the atrocities committed on Hindus in Pakistan and including those who were fleeing from the inferno, caused a strong reaction in India. In the Marathi-speaking areas of Bombay Province there was a strong though not so numerous a militant group, a section of the Hindu Mahasabha which could not bear all these atrocities on their co-religionists and remain quiet or quiescent. They never liked the Congress policy of non-violence and still less what they considered the policy of appeasement. This added to their dislike of the Congress and Congress leaders and a filip to Savarkar's school of thought. They started arms collection for Hyderabad State and made every effort to do so even in breach of the provision of the Arms Act; so much so that the D.S.P. of Ahmednagar requested the District Magistrate to promulgate a prohibitory order under section 144, Cr.P.C. against import, export or transport of arms. This order was later extended under section 144(6), Cr.P.C. by Government. (Ex. 148—original order). Whether, in view of the dangers to which the Hindu inhabitants of the State of Hyderabad and those residing on its borders in Bombay Province were exposed, this was a wise or unwise policy or whether an administration, which could not protect its citizens against desperadoes who had assumed the role of *Ghazis*, should have acted in this manner or not is not a matter on which the Commission is called upon to express its opinion. The fact remains that there were Indian agencies, some genuine and others not so altruistic, which considered the collection of arms and supplying them to people who were being subjected to lust and blood thirsty greed of fanatical religionists as the proper answer and took active steps to put their plan of meeting the menace into operation by procuring and supplying arms. This also gave an opportunity to use this menace as a facade by the Hindu Mahasabha for their anti-Congress propaganda.

17.6 Amongst those who advocated the supply of arms the place of prominence goes to the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha, but even some Congressmen did not hesitate to join the cry for arming the people. Mr. H. B. Bhide in his speech at Belgaum on the occasion of protesting against the Direct Action Day (on May 23, 1947), Balshastri Hardas at Nasik vide weekly letter of May 24, 1947; and Mr. Ashutosh Lahiry and Mr. V. B. Gogte, all members of the Hindu Mahasabha, advocated collection of arms. They got the support of Mr. K. M. Jedhe in January or February 1948. And in January 1948 Balukaka Kanitkar extended his weighty support which was further buttressed by the resolution of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, referred to in the speech of Mr. V. B. Gogte, Ex. 214 dated January 6, 1948. Ex. 211-A contains on various pages accounts of persons collecting and selling arms in widely distant places; e.g., Manmad, Satara, Londa, Godhra and Bijapur, and also speeches of Messrs. Annasahib Shinde, Nagre, V. B. Gogte and Joshi, showing a spectrum of political opinion.